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Standard Library Edition

THE WRITINGS
OF
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH
CRITICAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTIONS
AND NOTES BY EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE
AND OTHERS

ILLUSTRATED WITH STEEL PORTRAITS AND ENGRAVINGS FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGNS BY BROWNE, CRUIKSHANK LEECH, AND OTHERS

IN THIRTY-TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME XXV

K.H.

[redacted]

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CHRISTMAS BOOKS

TALES AND SKETCHES

BY

CHARLES DICKENS

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
[illegible]

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Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy
Chapter I. Mrs. Lirriper relates how she went on, and went over . . .
VII. Mrs. Lirriper relates how Jemmy topped up
Doctor Marigold .
Two Ghost Stories
Chapter I. The Trial for Murder
II. The Signal-Man . .
Mugby Junction
Chapter I. Barbox Brothers .
II. Barbox Brothers and Co.
III. The Boy at Mugby .
No Thoroughfare
The Overture
Act III. In the Valley . . . . .

PAGE

...'S A KIND, MA'AM" (p. 357) . . . . *Frontispiece.*

...TOOK HER IN HIS ARMS, AND TOLD HER IT WAS FANCY" [illegible]

...K AT THE SNIVELLING MILKSOP!" . . . . . . [illegible]

...AM ONLY A COMMON SOLDIER, SIR,' SAID HE" . . [illegible]

"CHRISTIAN GEORGE KING SAR, BERRY SORRY!" [illegible]

...MUST YOU BE MARRIED NOW?" . . . . [illegible]

"IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT YOU ARE A PIG!" [illegible]

...ING SOPHY DOWN UPON HER KNEES" . . . [illegible]

...AT WOULD YOU DO WITH TWOPENCE?" "PENCE..." [illegible]

...IS STRIPPED FOR IT" . . . . [illegible]

...frontispiece is from the original drawing of F. [illegible] The illustrations were drawn by E. G. Dalziel.

[redacted]

CHRISTMAS BOOKS, TALES AND SKETCHES

A CHRISTMAS TREE

I HAVE been looking on, this evening, at a merry company of children assembled round that pretty German toy, a Christmas Tree. The tree was planted in the middle of a great round table, and towered high above their heads. It was brilliantly lighted by a multitude of little tapers; and everywhere sparkled and glittered with bright objects. There were rosy-cheeked dolls, hiding behind the green leaves; there were real watches (with movable hands, at least, and an endless capacity of being wound up) dangling from innumerable twigs; there were French-polished tables, chairs, bedsteads, wardrobes, eight-day clocks, and various other articles of domestic furniture (wonderfully made, in tin, at Wolverhampton), perched among the boughs, as if in preparation for some fairy housekeeping; there were jolly, broad-faced little men, much more agreeable in appearance than many real men — and no wonder, for their heads took off, and showed them to be full of sugar-plums; there were fiddles and drums; there were tambourines, books, work-boxes, paint-boxes, sweetmeat-boxes, peep-show boxes, — all kinds of boxes; there were trinkets for the elder girls, far brighter than any grown-up gold and jewels; there were baskets and pincushions in all devices; there were guns, swords, and banners; there were witches standing in enchanted rings of pasteboard, to tell fortunes; there were teetotums, humming-tops, needle-cases, pen-wipers, smelling-bottles, conversation-cards, bouquet-holders; real fruit, made artificially dazzling with gold leaf imitation apples, pears, and walnuts, crammed with surprises; in short, as a pretty child, before me, delightedly whispered to another pretty child, her bosom friend, "There was everything, and more." This motley collection of odd objects clustering on

CHRISTMAS BOOKS, TALES AND SKETCHES

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appears to be the case now. The tinkling works of the m cart, I *did* find out to be made of quill tooth-picks and and I always thought that little tumbler in his shirt-sl perpetually swarming up one side of a wooden frame, and ing down, head foremost, on the other, rather a weak-m person -- though good-natured; but the Jacob's Ladder, him, made of little squares of red wood, that went flapping clattering over one another, each developing a different pi and the whole enlivened by small bells, was a mighty m and a great delight.

Ah! The Doll's house! — of which I was not propr but where I visited. I don't admire the Houses of Parlia half so much as that stone-fronted mansion with real glass dows, and door-steps, and a real balcony — greener than I see now, except at watering-places; and even they afford poor imitation. And though it *did* open all at once, the house-front (which was a blow, I admit, as cancelling the f of a staircase), it was but to shut it up again, and I could be Even open, there were three distinct rooms in it; a sitting and bedroom, elegantly furnished, and, best of all, a kit with uncommonly soft fire-irons, a plentiful assortment of d utive utensils — oh, the warming-pan! — and a tin man-co profile, who was always going to fry two fish. What Barm justice have I done to the noble feasts wherein the set of w platters figured, each with its own peculiar delicacy, as a or turkey, glued tight on to it, and garnished with some green, which I recollect as moss! Could all the Tempe Societies of these later days, united, give me such a tea-dri as I have had through the means of yonder little set of crockery, which really would hold liquid (it ran out of the wooden cask, I recollect, and tasted of matches), and made tea, nectar. And if the two legs of the ineffectual sugar-tongs did tumble over one another, and want purpose Punch's hands, what does it matter? And if I did once s out, as a poisoned child, and strike the fashionable com with consternation, by reason of having drunk a little teas inadvertently dissolved in too hot tea, I was never the for it, except by a powder!

Upon the next branches of the tree, lower down, hard b green roller and miniature gardening-tools, how thick the begin to hang. Thin books, in themselves, at first, but

[redacted]

inister expression in that nose of his; and when he got his legs ound his neck (which he very often did), he was ghastly, and ot a creature to be alone with.

When did that dreadful Mask first look at me? Who put t on, and why was I so frightened that the sight of it is an era n my life? It is not a hideous visage in itself; it is even meant to be droll; why, then, were its stolid features so intolerable? Surely not because it hid the wearer's face. An apron would have done as much; and though I should have preferred even the apron away, it would not have been absolutely insupportable, like the mask? Was it the immovability of the mask? The doll's face was immovable, but I was not afraid of *her*. Perhaps that fixed and set change coming over a real face infused into my quickened heart some remote suggestion and dread of the universal change that is to come on every face, and make it still? Nothing reconciled me to it. No drummers, from whom proceeded a melancholy chirping on the turning of a handle; no regiment of soldiers, with a mute band, taken out of a box, and fitted, one by one, upon a stiff and lazy little set of lazy tongs; no old woman, made of wires and a brown-paper composition, cutting up a pie for two small children, could give me a permanent comfort for a long time. Nor was it any satisfaction to be shown the Mask, and see that it was made of paper, or to have it locked up and be assured that no one wore it. The mere recollection of that fixed face, the mere knowledge of its existence anywhere, was sufficient to awake me in the night, all perspiration and horror, with, "Oh, I know it's coming! Oh, the mask!"

I never wondered what the dear old donkey with the panniers — there he is! — was made of then! His hide was real to the touch, I recollect. And the great black horse with round red spots all over him — the horse that I could even get upon — I never wondered what had brought him to that strange condition, or thought that such a horse was not commonly seen at Newmarket. The four horses of no colour, next to him, that went into the wagon of cheeses, and could be taken out and stabled under the piano, appear to have bits of fur-tippet for their tails, and other bits for their manes, and to stand on pegs instead of legs, but it was not so when they were brought home for a Christmas present. They were all right then; neither was their harness unceremoniously nailed into their chests, as

[illegible] The [illegible] of the [illegible] made of [illegible] tooth-picks and wire; and I always thought that little tumbler in his shirt-sleeves, perpetually swarming up one side of a wooden frame, and coming down, head foremost, on the other, rather a weak-minded person—though good-natured; but the Jacob's Ladder, next him, made of little squares of red wood, that went flapping and clattering over one another, each developing a different picture, and the whole enlivened by small bells, was a mighty marvel and a great delight.

Ah! The Doll's house!—of which I was not proprietor, but where I visited. I don't admire the Houses of Parliament half so much as that stone-fronted mansion with real glass windows, and door-steps, and a real balcony—greener than I ever see now, except at watering-places; and even they afford but a poor imitation. And though it did open all at once, the entire house-front (which was a blow, I admit, as cancelling the fiction of a staircase), it was but to shut it up again, and I could believe. Even open, there were three distinct rooms in it: a sitting-room and bed-room, elegantly furnished, and, best of all, a kitchen, with uncommonly soft fire-irons, a plentiful assortment of diminutive utensils—oh, the warming-pan!—and a tin man-cook in profile, who was always going to fry two fish. What Barmecide justice have I done to the noble feasts wherein the set of wooden platters figured, each with its own peculiar delicacy, as a ham or turkey, glued tight on to it, and garnished with something green, which I recollect as moss! Could all the Temperance Societies of these later days, united, give me such a tea-drinking as I have had through the means of yonder little set of blue crockery, which really would hold liquid (it ran out of the small wooden cask, I recollect, and tasted of matches), and which made tea, nectar. And if the two legs of the ineffectual little sugar tongs did tumble over one another, and want purpose, like Punch's hands, what does it matter? And if I did once shriek out, as a poisoned child, and strike the fashionable company with consternation, by reason of having drunk a little teaspoon, inadvertently dissolved in too hot tea, I was never the worse for it, except by a powder!

Upon the next branches of the tree, lower down, hard by the green roller and miniature gardening-tools, how thick the books begin to hang. Thin books, in themselves, at first, but many

[illegible] to fly away with me, as the wooden [illegible] Prince of Persia, in the sight of all his [illegible]

[illegible] that I recognise among those upper [illegible] Tree. I see this fairy light! When [illegible] the cold dark winter mornings, [illegible] outside, through the frost on the [illegible] "Sister, sister, if you are yet [illegible] of the Young King of the [illegible] "If my lord the Sultan [illegible]. I will not only finish [illegible] story yet." Then the [illegible] for the execution, [illegible]

[illegible] among the [illegible] or mince pie, [illegible] on his [illegible] and [illegible] — or it [illegible] and [illegible]

[redacted]

[illegible] when Pantaloon [illegible] my own mind [illegible] in his pocket, and [illegible] the Clown with [illegible] "Now, I saw[illegible] do it!" when [illegible] of being chang[illegible] but thinking makes [illegible] experience of the dreary [illegible] after life [illegible] of being unable [illegible] settled world; of wanting [illegible] I have quitted; of do[illegible] wand like a celestial Barber's [illegible] immortality along with her. [illegible] as my eye wanders dow[illegible] Tree, and goes as often, and ha[illegible]

[illegible] springs the toy-theatre, — then [illegible] proscenium, and ladies in feathers, [illegible] its attendant occupation with paste

[redacted]

transformed man, who jumped upon the baker's counter, and put his paw on the piece of bad money. All rice recalls the rice which the awful lady, who was a ghoul, could only peck by grains, because of her nightly feasts in the burial-place. My very rocking-horse — there he is, with his nostrils turned completely inside-out, indicative of Blood! — should have a peg in his neck, by virtue thereof to fly away with me, as the wooden horse did with the Prince of Persia, in the sight of all his father's Court.

Yes, on every object that I recognise among those upper branches of my Christmas Tree, I see this fairy light! When I wake in bed, at daybreak, on the cold dark winter mornings, the white snow dimly beheld, outside, through the frost on the window-pane, I hear Dinarzade. "Sister, sister, if you are yet awake, I pray you finish the history of the Young King of the Black Islands." Scheherazade replies, "If my lord the Sultan will suffer me to live another day, sister, I will not only finish that, but tell you a more wonderful story yet." Then the gracious Sultan goes out, giving no orders for the execution, and we all three breathe again.

At this height of my tree I begin to see, cowering among the leaves, — it may be born of turkey, or of pudding, or mince pie, or of these many fancies, jumbled with Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, Philip Quarll among the monkeys, Sandford and Merton with Mr. Barlow, Mother Bunch, and the Mask, — or it may be the result of indigestion, assisted by imagination and over-doctoring, — a prodigious nightmare. It is so exceedingly indistinct that I don't know why it's frightful — but I know it is. I can only make out that it is an immense array of shapeless things which appear to be planted on a vast exaggeration of the lazy tongs that used to bear the toy soldiers, and to be slowly coming close to my eyes, and receding to an immeasurable distance. When it comes closest, it is worst. In connection with it I descry remembrances of winter nights incredibly long; of being sent early to bed, as a punishment for some small offence, and waking in two hours, with a sensation of having been asleep two nights; of the laden hopelessness of morning ever dawning; and the oppression of a weight of remorse.

And now I see a wonderful row of little lights rise smoothly out of the ground, before a vast green curtain. Now a bell

they do! Yonder they dance and play upon the branches of my Tree, God bless them, merrily, and my heart dances and plays, too!

And I do come home at Christmas. We all do, or we all should. We all come home, or ought to come home, for a short holiday—the longer, the better—from the great boarding-school, where we are for ever working at our arithmetical slates, to take and give a rest. As to going a visiting, where can we not go, if we will; where have we not been, when we would, starting our fancy from our Christmas Tree!

Away into the winter prospect. There are many [illegible] upon the tree! On, by low-lying, misty grounds, through fens and fogs, up long hills, winding dark as caverns between thick plantations, almost shutting out the sparkling stars; so, out on broad heights, until we stop at last, with sudden silence, at an avenue. The gate-bell has a deep, half-awful sound in the frosty air; [illegible]

[illegible]

[redacted]

d gum, and water colours, in the getting-up of The Miller d his Men, and Elizabeth, or the Exile of Siberia. In spite a few besetting accidents and failures (particularly an unasonable disposition in the respectable Kelmar, and some thers, to become faint in the legs, and double up, at exciting oints of the drama), a teeming world of fancies, so suggestive nd all-embracing, that, far below it on my Christmas Tree, I ee dark, dirty, real Theatres in the daytime, adorned with hese associations as with the freshest garlands of the rarest lowers, and charming me yet.

But hark! The Waits are playing, and they break my childish sleep! What images do I associate with the Christmas music as I see them set forth on the Christmas Tree? Known before all the others, keeping far apart from all the others, they gather round my little bed. An angel, speaking to a group of shepherds in a field; some travellers, with eyes uplifted, following a star; a baby in a manger; a child in a spacious temple, talking with grave men; a solemn figure, with a mild and beautiful face, raising a dead girl by the hand; again, near a city gate, calling back the son of a widow, on his bier, to life; a crowd of people looking through the opened roof of a chamber where he sits, and letting down a sick person on a bed, with ropes; the same, in a tempest, walking on the water to a ship; again, on a sea-shore, teaching a great multitude; again, with a child upon his knee, and other children round; again, restoring sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf, health to the sick, strength to the lame, knowledge to the ignorant; again, dying upon a Cross, watched by armed soldiers, a thick darkness coming on, the earth beginning to shake, and only one voice heard, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

Still, on the lower and maturer branches of the Tree, Christmas associations cluster thick. School-books shut up; Ovid and Virgil silenced; the Rule of Three, with its cool, impertinent inquiries, long disposed of; Terence and Plautus acted no more, in an arena of huddled desks and forms, all chipped, and notched, and inked; cricket-bats, stumps, and balls, left higher up, with the smell of trodden grass and the softened noise of shouts in the evening air; the Tree is still fresh, still gay. If I no more come home at Christmas time, there will be girls and boys (thank Heaven!) while the World lasts; and

they do! Yonder they dance and play upon the branches of my Tree, God bless them, merrily, and my heart dances and plays, too!

And I *do* come home at Christmas. We all do, or we all should. We all come home, or ought to come home, for a short holiday—the longer, the better—from the great boarding-school, where we are for ever working at our arithmetical slates, to take, and give a rest. As to going a visiting, where can we not go, if we will; where have we not been, when we would, starting our fancy from our Christmas Tree!

Away into the winter prospect. There are many such upon the tree! On, by low-lying, misty grounds, through fens and fogs, up long hills, winding dark as caverns between thick plantations, almost shutting out the sparkling stars; so, out on broad heights, until we stop at last, with sudden silence, at an avenue. The gate-bell has a deep, half-awful sound in the frosty air; the gate swings open on its hinges; and as we drive up to a great house, the glancing lights grow larger in the windows, and the opposing rows of trees seem to fall solemnly back on either side, to give us place. At intervals, all day, a frightened hare has shot across this whitened turf; or the distant clatter of a herd of deer trampling the hard frost, has, for the minute, crushed the silence too. Their watchful eyes beneath the fern may be shining now, if we could see them, like the icy dewdrops on the leaves; but they are still, and all is still. And so, the lights growing larger, and the trees falling back before us, and closing up again behind us, as if to forbid retreat, we come to the house.

There is probably a smell of roasted chestnuts and other good comfortable things all the time, for we are telling Winter Stories—Ghost Stories, or more shame for us—round the Christmas fire; and we have never stirred, except to draw a little nearer to it. But, no matter for that. We came to the house, and it is an old house, full of great chimneys where wood is burnt on ancient dogs upon the hearth, and grim portraits (some of them with grim legends, too) lower distrustfully from the oaken panels of the walls. We are a middle-aged nobleman, and we make a generous supper with our host and hostess and their guests—it being Christmas-time, and the old house full of company—and then we go to bed. Our room is a very old room. It is hung with tapestry. We don't like

the portrait of a cavalier in green, over the fireplace. There are great black beams in the ceiling, and there is a great black bedstead, supported at the foot by two great black figures, who seem to have come off a couple of tombs in the old baronial church in the park, for our particular accommodation. But we are not a superstitious nobleman, and we don't mind. Well! we dismiss our servant, lock the door, and sit before the fire in our dressing-gown, musing about a great many things. At length we go to bed. Well! we can't sleep. We toss and tumble, and can't sleep. The embers on the hearth burn fitfully and make the room look ghostly. We can't help peeping out over the counterpane, at the two black figures and the cavalier — that wicked-looking cavalier — in green. In the flickering light, they seem to advance and retire; which, though we are not by any means a superstitious nobleman, is not agreeable. Well! we get nervous — more and more nervous. We say, "This is very foolish, but we can't stand this; we'll pretend to be ill, and knock up somebody." Well! we are just going to do it, when the locked door opens, and there comes in a young woman, deadly pale, and with long fair hair, who glides to the fire, and sits down in the chair we have left there, wringing her hands. Then we notice that her clothes are wet. Our tongue cleaves to the roof of our mouth, and we can't speak; but we observe her accurately. Her clothes are wet; her long hair is dabbled with moist mud; she is dressed in the fashion of two hundred years ago; and she has at her girdle a bunch of rusty keys. Well! there she sits, and we can't even faint, we are in such a state about it. Presently she gets up and tries all the locks in the room with the rusty keys, which won't fit one of them; then she fixes her eyes on the portrait of the cavalier in green, and says, in a low, terrible voice, "The stags know it!" After that she wrings her hands again, passes the bedside, and goes out at the door. We hurry on our dressing-gown, seize our pistols (we always travel with pistols), and are following, when we find the door locked. We turn the key, look out into the dark gallery; no one there. We wander away, and try to find our servant. Can't be done. We pace the gallery till daybreak; then return to our deserted room, fall asleep, and are awakened by our servant (nothing ever haunts *him*) and the shining sun. Well! we make a wretched breakfast, and all the company say we look queer. After

breakfast, we go over the house with our host, and then we take him to the portrait of the cavalier in green, and then it all comes out. He was false to a young housekeeper once attached to that family, and famous for her beauty, who drowned herself in a pond, and whose body was discovered, after a long time, because the stags refused to drink of the water. Since which it has been whispered that she traverses the house at midnight (but goes especially to that room where the cavalier in green was wont to sleep), trying the old locks with the rusty keys. Well! we tell our host of what we have seen, and a shade comes over his features, and he begs it may be hushed up; and so it is. But it 's all true; and we said so, before we died (we are dead now), to many responsible people.

There is no end to the old houses, with resounding galleries and dismal state bed-chambers, and haunted wings shut up for many years, through which we may ramble, with an agreeable creeping up our back, and encounter any number of ghosts, but (it is worthy of remark, perhaps) reducible to a very few general types and classes; for ghosts have little originality, and "walk" in a beaten track. Thus it comes to pass that a certain room in a certain old hall, where a certain bad lord, baronet, knight, or gentleman shot himself, has certain planks in the floor from which the blood *will not* be taken out. You may scrape and scrape, as the present owner has done, or plane and plane, as his father did, or scrub and scrub, as his grandfather did, or burn and burn with strong acids, as his great-grandfather did, but there the blood will still be — no redder and no paler — no more and no less — always just the same. Thus in such another house there is a haunted door, that never will keep open; or another door that never will keep shut; or a haunted sound of a spinning-wheel, or a hammer, or a footstep, or a cry, or a sigh, or a horse's tramp, or the rattling of a chain. Or else there is a turret-clock, which, at the midnight hour, strikes thirteen when the head of the family is going to die; or a shadowy, immovable black carriage which at such a time is always seen by somebody, waiting near the great gates in the stable-yard. Or thus it came to pass how Lady Mary went to pay a visit at a large wild house in the Scottish Highlands, and, being fatigued with her long journey, retired to bed early, and innocently said, next morning, at the breakfast-table, "How odd, to have

party last night, in this remote place, and not to tell
t, before I went to bed?" Then every one asked Lady
what she meant? Then Lady Mary replied, "Why,
it long, the carriages were driving round and round
ace, underneath my window!" Then the owner of
se turned pale, and so did his Lady, and Charles Mac-
of Macdoodle signed to Lady Mary to say no more, and
ne was silent. After breakfast, Charles Macdoodle told
lary that it was a tradition in the family that those rum-
arriages on the terrace betokened death. And so it
for, two months afterwards, the Lady of the mansion
And Lady Mary, who was a Maid of Honour at Court,
ld this story to the old Queen Charlotte; by this token
e old King always said, "Eh, eh? What, what?
ghosts? No such thing, no such thing!" And never
saying so until he went to bed.

friend of somebody's, whom most of us know, when he
oung man at college, had a particular friend, with whom
made the compact that, if it were possible for the Spirit
n to this earth after its separation from the body, he of
in who first died should reappear to the other. In
of time this compact was forgotten by our friend; the
ing men having progressed in life, and taken divergent
hat were wide asunder. But, one night, many years
rds, our friend being in the North of England, and stay-
the night in an inn, on the Yorkshire Moors, happened
out of bed; and there, in the moonlight, leaning on a
near the window, steadfastly regarding him, saw his old
friend! The appearance being solemnly addressed, re-
n a kind of whisper, but very audibly, "Do not come
. I am dead. I am here to redeem my promise. I
rom another world, but may not disclose its secrets!"
he whole form, becoming paler, melted, as it were, into
onlight, and faded away.

here was the daughter of the first occupier of the pic-
e Elizabethan house, so famous in our neighbourhood.
ave heard about her? No! Why, She went out one
evening, at twilight, when she was a beautiful girl,
enteen years of age, to gather flowers in the garden;
esently came running, terrified, into the hall to her
saying, "Oh, dear father, I have met myself!" He

took her in his arms, and told her it was fancy, but she said, "Oh, no! I met myself in the broad walk, and I was pale, and gathering withered flowers, and I turned my head, and held them up!" And that night she died, and a picture of her story was begun, though never finished, and they say it is somewhere in the house to this day, with its face to the wall.

Or the uncle of my brother's wife was riding home on horseback, one mellow evening at sunset, when, in a green lane close to his own house, he saw a man standing before him, in the very centre of the narrow way. "Why does that man in the cloak stand there!" he thought. "Does he want me to ride over him?" But the figure never moved. He felt a strange sensation at seeing it so still, but slackened his trot and rode forward. When he was so close to it as almost to touch it with his stirrup, his horse shied, and the figure glided up the bank, in a curious, unearthly manner, — backward, and without seeming to use its feet, — and was gone. The uncle of my brother's wife, exclaiming, "Good Heaven! It's my cousin Harry, from Bombay!" put spurs to his horse, which was suddenly in a profuse sweat, and, wondering at such strange behaviour, dashed round to the front of his house. There he saw the same figure, just passing in at the long french window of the drawing-room, opening on the ground. He threw his bridle to a servant, and hastened in after it. His sister was sitting there, alone. "Alice, where's my cousin Harry?" "Your cousin Harry, John?" "Yes. From Bombay. I met him in the lane just now, and saw him enter here, this instant." Not a creature had been seen by any one; and in that hour and minute, as it afterwards appeared, this cousin died in India.

Or it was a certain sensible old maiden lady, who died at ninety-nine, and retained her faculties to the last, who really did see the Orphan Boy; a story which has often been incorrectly told, but of which the real truth is this — because it is, in fact, a story belonging to our family — and she was a connection of our family. When she was about forty years of age, and still an uncommonly fine woman (her lover died young, which was the reason why she never married, though she had many offers), she went to stay at a place in Kent, which her brother, an Indian merchant, had newly bought. There was a story that this place had once been held in trust by the guardian

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of a young boy, who was himself the next heir, and who killed the young boy by harsh and cruel treatment. She knew nothing of that. It has been said that there was a cage in her bedroom in which the guardian used to put the boy. There was no such thing. There was only a closet. She went to bed, made no alarm whatever in the night, and in the morning said composedly to her maid when she came in, "Who is the pretty, forlorn-looking child who has been peeping out of that closet all night?" The maid replied by giving a loud scream, and instantly decamping. She was surprised; but she was a woman of remarkable strength of mind, and she dressed herself and went down stairs, and closeted herself with her brother. "Now, Walter," she said, "I have been disturbed all night by a pretty, forlorn-looking boy, who has been constantly peeping out of that closet in my room, which I can't open. This is some trick." "I am afraid not, Charlotte," said he, "for it is the legend of the house. It is the Orphan Boy. What did he do?" "He opened the door softly," said she, "and peeped out. Sometimes he came a step or two into the room. Then I called to him, to encourage him, and he shrunk, and shuddered, and crept in again, and shut the door." "The closet has no communication, Charlotte," said her brother, "with any other part of the house, and it 's nailed up." This was undeniably true, and it took two carpenters a whole forenoon to get it open, for examination. Then she was satisfied that she had seen the Orphan Boy. But the wild and terrible part of the story is that he was also seen by three of her brother's sons, in succession, who all died young. On the occasion of each child being taken ill, he came home in a heat, twelve hours before, and said, Oh, mamma, he had been playing under a particular oak tree, in a certain meadow, with a strange boy — a pretty, forlorn-looking boy, who was very timid, and made signs! From fatal experience, the parents came to know that this was the Orphan Boy, and that the course of that child whom he chose for his little playmate was surely run.

Legion is the name of the German castles, where we sit up alone to wait for the Spectre — where we are shown into a room, made comparatively cheerful for our reception — where we glance round at the shadows, thrown on the blank walls by the crackling fire — where we feel very lonely when the village innkeeper and his pretty daughter have retired, after laying

down a fresh store of wood upon the hearth, and setting
on the small table such supper-cheer as a cold roast
bread, grapes, and a flask of old Rhine wine — where the
berating doors close on their retreat, one after another, li
many peals of sullen thunder — and where, about the
hours of the night, we come into the knowledge of divers
natural mysteries. Legion is the name of the haunted G
students, in whose society we draw yet nearer to the fire,
the schoolboy in the corner opens his eyes wide and roun
flies off the footstool he has chosen for his seat, when th
accidentally blows open. Vast is the crop of such fruit, sl
on our Christmas Tree; in blossom, almost at the very
ripening all down the boughs!

Among the latter toys and fancies hanging there — a
often and less pure — be the images once associated wit
sweet old Waits, the softened music in the night, ever un
able! Encircled by the social thoughts of Christmas time
let the benignant figure of my childhood stand unchanged
every cheerful image and suggestion that the season brings
the bright star that rested above the poor roof be the s
all the Christian world! A moment's pause, O vanishing
of which the lower boughs are dark to me as yet, and l
look once more! I know there are blank spaces on
branches, where eyes that I have loved have shone and sm
from which they are departed. But far above I see the
of the dead girl, and the Widow's Son; and God is good
Age be hiding for me in the unseen portion of thy down
growth, oh, may I, with a grey head, turn a child's heart t
figure yet, and a child's trustfulness and confidence!

Now the tree is decorated with bright merriment, and
and dance, and cheerfulness. And they are welcome.
cent and welcome be they ever held, beneath the branch
the Christmas Tree, which cast no gloomy shadow! But
sinks into the ground, I hear a whisper going through the le
"This, in commemoration of the law of love and kin
mercy and compassion. This, in remembrance of Me!"

AT CHRISTMAS IS, AS WE GROW OLDER

E was, with most of us, when Christmas Day, encircling limited world like a magic ring, left nothing out for us s or seek; bound together all our home enjoyments, ns, and hopes; grouped everything and every one around ristmas fire; and made the little picture shining in our young eyes complete.

e came, perhaps, all so soon! when our thoughts over- that narrow boundary; when there was some one (very e thought then, very beautiful, and absolutely perfect) g to the fulness of our happiness; when we were want- o (or we thought so, which did just as well) at the mas hearth by which that some one sat; and when we ined with every wreath and garland of our life that some name.

t was the time for the bright visionary Christmases which ong arisen from us to show faintly, after summer rain, in lest edges of the rainbow! That was the time for the ed enjoyment of the things that were to be, and never and yet the things that were so real in our resolute hope would be hard to say, now, what realities achieved since een stronger!

at! Did that Christmas never really come when we and riceless pearl who was our young choice were received, the happiest of totally impossible marriages, by the two families previously at daggers-drawn on our account? brothers and sisters in law, who had always been rather us before our relationship was effected, perfectly doted and when fathers and mothers overwhelmed us with un- l incomes? Was that Christmas dinner never really after which we arose, and generously and eloquently ren- honour to our late rival, present in the company, then ere exchanging friendship and forgiveness, and founding achment, not to be surpassed in Greek or Roman story, subsisted until death? Has that same rival long ceased

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to care for that same priceless pearl, and married for m and become usurious? Above all, do we really know, that we should probably have been miserable if we ha and worn the pearl, and that we are better without her?

That Christmas when we had recently achieved so fame; when we had been carried in triumph somewhe doing something great and good; when we had won a oured and ennobled name, and arrived and were recei home in a shower of tears of joy; — is it possible tha Christmas has not come yet?

And is our life here, at the best, so constituted that, p as we advance at such a noticeable milestone in the tr this great birthday, we look back on the things that never as naturally and full as gravely as on the things that hav and are gone, or have been and still are? If it be so, a it seems to be, must we come to the conclusion that life is better than a dream, and little worth the loves and str that we crowd into it?

No! Far be such miscalled philosophy from us, Reader, on Christmas Day! Nearer and closer to our hea the Christmas spirit, which is the spirit of active usef perseverance, cheerful discharge of duty, kindness, and f ance! It is in the last virtues especially that we are, or s be, strengthened by the unaccomplished visions of our y for who shall say that they are not our teachers to deal g even with the impalpable nothings of the earth!

Therefore, as we grow older, let us be more thankf the circle of our Christmas associations and of the lesso they bring expands! Let us welcome every one of the summon them to take their places by the Christmas heart

Welcome, old aspirations, glittering creatures of an fancy, to your shelter underneath the holly! We kn and have not outlived you yet. Welcome, old projects a loves, however fleeting, to your nooks among the steadier that burn around us. Welcome, all that was ever real hearts; and for the earnestness that made you real, tha Heaven! Do we build no Christmas castles in the now? Let our thoughts, fluttering like butterflies among flowers of children, bear witness! Before this boy, stretches out a Future, brighter than we ever looked on old romantic time, but bright with honour and with

Around this little head, on which the sunny curls lie heaped, the graces sport, as prettily, as airily, as when there was no scythe within the reach of Time to shear away the curls of our first love. Upon another girl's face near it, — placider, but smiling bright, — a quiet and contented little face, we see Home fairly written. Shining from the word, as rays shine from a star, we see how, when our graves are old, other hopes than ours are young; other hearts than ours are moved; how other ways are smoothed; how other happiness blooms, ripens, and decays — no, not decays, for other homes and other bands of children, not yet in being, nor for ages yet to be, arise, and bloom and ripen to the end of all.

Welcome, everything! Welcome, alike what has been, and what never was, and what we hope we may be, to your shelter underneath the holly, to your places round the Christmas fire, where what is sits open-hearted. In yonder shadow, do we see obtruding furtively upon the blaze an enemy's face? By Christmas Day we do forgive him! If the injury he has done us may admit of such companionship, let him come here and take his place. If otherwise, unhappily, let him go hence, assured that we will never injure nor accuse him!

On this day, we shut out Nothing!

"Pause," says a low voice. "Nothing? Think!"

"On Christmas Day, we will shut out from our fireside, Nothing."

"Not the shadow of a vast city where the withered leaves are lying deep?" the voice replies. "Not the shadow that darkens the whole globe? Not the shadow of the City of the Dead?"

Not even that. Of all days in the year, we will turn our faces towards that city upon Christmas Day, and from its silent hosts bring those we loved among us. City of the Dead, in the blessed name wherein we are gathered together at this time, and in the Presence that is here among us according to the promise, we will receive, and not dismiss, thy people who are dear to us!

Yes. We can look upon these children angels that alight, so solemnly, so beautifully, among the living children by the fire, and can bear to think how they departed from us. Entertaining angels unawares, as the Patriarchs did, the playful children are unconscious of their guests; but we can see them

down a fresh store of wood upon the hearth, and setting forth on the small table such supper-cheer as a cold roast capon, bread, grapes, and a flask of old Rhine wine — where the reverberating doors close on their retreat, one after another, like so many peals of sullen thunder — and where, about the small hours of the night, we come into the knowledge of divers supernatural mysteries. Legion is the name of the haunted German students, in whose society we draw yet nearer to the fire, while the schoolboy in the corner opens his eyes wide and round, and flies off the footstool he has chosen for his seat, when the door accidentally blows open. Vast is the crop of such fruit, shining on our Christmas Tree; in blossom, almost at the very top; ripening all down the boughs!

Among the latter toys and fancies hanging there — as idle often and less pure — be the images once associated with the sweet old Waits, the softened music in the night, ever unalterable! Encircled by the social thoughts of Christmas time, still let the benignant figure of my childhood stand unchanged! In every cheerful image and suggestion that the season brings, may the bright star that rested above the poor roof be the star of all the Christian world! A moment's pause, O vanishing tree, of which the lower boughs are dark to me as yet, and let me look once more! I know there are blank spaces on thy branches, where eyes that I have loved have shone and smiled; from which they are departed. But far above I see the raiser of the dead girl, and the Widow's Son; and God is good! If Age be hiding for me in the unseen portion of thy downward growth, oh, may I, with a grey head, turn a child's heart to that figure yet, and a child's trustfulness and confidence!

Now the tree is decorated with bright merriment, and song, and dance, and cheerfulness. And they are welcome. Innocent and welcome be they ever held, beneath the branches of the Christmas Tree, which cast no gloomy shadow! But as it sinks into the ground, I hear a whisper going through the leaves: "This, in commemoration of the law of love and kindness, mercy and compassion. This, in remembrance of Me!"

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WHAT CHRISTMAS IS, AS WE GROW OLDER

TIME was, with most of us, when Christmas Day, encircling all our limited world like a magic ring, left nothing out for us to miss or seek; bound together all our home enjoyments, affections, and hopes; grouped everything and every one around the Christmas fire; and made the little picture shining in our bright young eyes complete.

Time came, perhaps, all so soon! when our thoughts over-leaped that narrow boundary; when there was some one (very dear, we thought then, very beautiful, and absolutely perfect) wanting to the fulness of our happiness; when we were wanting too (or we thought so, which did just as well) at the Christmas hearth by which that some one sat; and when we intertwined with every wreath and garland of our life that some one's name.

That was the time for the bright visionary Christmases which have long arisen from us to show faintly, after summer rain, in the palest edges of the rainbow! That was the time for the beatified enjoyment of the things that were to be, and never were, and yet the things that were so real in our resolute hope that it would be hard to say, now, what realities achieved since have been stronger!

What! Did that Christmas never really come when we and the priceless pearl who was our young choice were received, after the happiest of totally impossible marriages, by the two united families previously at daggers-drawn on our account? When brothers and sisters in law, who had always been rather cool to us before our relationship was effected, perfectly doted on us, and when fathers and mothers overwhelmed us with unlimited incomes? Was that Christmas dinner never really eaten, after which we arose, and generously and eloquently rendered honour to our late rival, present in the company, then and there exchanging friendship and forgiveness, and founding an attachment, not to be surpassed in Greek or Roman story, which subsisted until death? Has that same rival long ceased

to care for that same priceless pearl, and married for money, and become usurious? Above all, do we really know, now, that we should probably have been miserable if we had won and worn the pearl, and that we are better without her?

That Christmas when we had recently achieved so much fame; when we had been carried in triumph somewhere, for doing something great and good; when we had won an honoured and ennobled name, and arrived and were received at home in a shower of tears of joy; — is it possible that that Christmas has not come yet?

And is our life here, at the best, so constituted that, pausing as we advance at such a noticeable milestone in the track as this great birthday, we look back on the things that never were, as naturally and full as gravely as on the things that have been and are gone, or have been and still are? If it be so, and so it seems to be, must we come to the conclusion that life is little better than a dream, and little worth the loves and strivings that we crowd into it?

No! Far be such miscalled philosophy from us, dear Reader, on Christmas Day! Nearer and closer to our hearts be the Christmas spirit, which is the spirit of active usefulness, perseverance, cheerful discharge of duty, kindness, and forbearance! It is in the last virtues especially that we are, or should be, strengthened by the unaccomplished visions of our youth; for who shall say that they are not our teachers to deal gently even with the impalpable nothings of the earth!

Therefore, as we grow older, let us be more thankful that the circle of our Christmas associations and of the lessons that they bring expands! Let us welcome every one of them, and summon them to take their places by the Christmas hearth.

Welcome, old aspirations, glittering creatures of an ardent fancy, to your shelter underneath the holly! We know you and have not outlived you yet. Welcome, old projects and old loves, however fleeting, to your nooks among the steadier lights that burn around us. Welcome, all that was ever real to our hearts; and for the earnestness that made you real, thanks to Heaven! Do we build no Christmas castles in the clouds now? Let our thoughts, fluttering like butterflies among these flowers of children, bear witness! Before this boy, there stretches out a Future, brighter than we ever looked on in our old romantic time, but bright with honour and with truth

pointed, in a general way. That I am at present a bachelor of between fifty-nine and sixty years of age, living on a limited income in the form of a quarterly allowance to which I see that John our esteemed host wishes me to make no further allusion.

The supposition as to my present pursuits and habits is to the following effect.

I live in a lodging in the Clapham Road — a very clean back room, in a very respectable house — where I am expected not to be at home in the day-time, unless poorly; and which I usually leave in the morning at nine o'clock, on pretence of going to business. I take my breakfast — my roll and butter, and my half-pint of coffee — at the old established coffee-shop near Westminster Bridge; and then I go into the City — I don't know why — and sit in Garraway's Coffee House, and on 'Change, and walk about, and look into a few offices and counting-houses where some of my relations or acquaintances are so good as to tolerate me, and where I stand by the fire if the weather happens to be cold. I get through the day in this way until five o'clock, and then I dine, at a cost, on the average, of one and threepence. Having still a little money to spend on my evening's entertainment, I look into the old-established coffee-shop as I go home, and take my cup of tea, and perhaps my bit of toast. So, as the large hand of the clock makes its way round to the morning hour again, I make my way round to the Clapham Road again, and go to bed when I get to my lodging — fire being expensive, and being objected to by the family on account of its giving trouble and making a dirt.

Sometimes, one of my relations or acquaintances is so obliging as to ask me to dinner. Those are holiday occasions, and then I generally walk in the Park. I am a solitary man, and seldom walk with anybody. Not that I am avoided because I am shabby, for I am not at all shabby, having always a very good suit of black on (or rather Oxford mixture, which has the appearance of black and wears much better); but I have got into a habit of speaking low, and being rather silent, and my spirits are not high, and I am sensible that I am not an attractive companion.

The only exception to this general rule is the child of my first cousin, Little Frank. I have a particular affection for that child, and he takes very kindly to me. He is a diffident boy by nature; and in a crowd he is soon run over, as I may say, and

— can see a radiant arm around one favourite neck, as if there were a tempting of that child away. Among the celestial figures there is one, a poor misshapen boy on earth, of a glorious beauty now, of whom his dying mother said it grieved her much to leave him here, alone, for so many years as it was likely would elapse before he came to her — being such a little child. But he went quickly, and was laid upon her breast, and in her hand she leads him.

There was a gallant boy, who fell, far away, upon a burning sand beneath a burning sun, and said, "Tell them at home, with my last love, how much I could have wished to kiss them once, but that I died contented and had done my duty!" Or there was another, over whom they read the words, "Therefore we commit his body to the deep!" and so consigned him to the lonely ocean and sailed on. Or there was another who lay down to his rest in the dark shadow of great forests, and, on earth, awoke no more. Oh, shall they not, from sand and sea and forest, be brought home at such a time!

There was a dear girl — almost a woman — never to be one — who made a mourning Christmas in a house of joy, and went her trackless way to the silent City. Do we recollect her, worn out, faintly whispering what could not be heard, and falling into that last sleep for weariness? Oh, look upon her now! Oh, look upon her beauty, her serenity, her changeless youth, her happiness! The daughter of Jairus was recalled to life, to die; but she, more blest, has heard the same voice, saying unto her, "Arise for ever!"

We had a friend who was our friend from early days, with whom we often pictured the changes that were to come upon our lives, and merrily imagined how we would speak, and walk, and think, and talk, when we came to be old. His destined habitation in the City of the Dead received him in his prime. Shall he be shut out from our Christmas remembrance? Would his love have so excluded us? Lost friend, lost child, lost parent, sister, brother, husband, wife, we will not so discard you! You shall hold your cherished places in our Christmas hearts, and by our Christmas fires; and in the season of immortal hope, and on the birthday of immortal mercy, we will shut out Nothing!

The winter sun goes down over town and village; on the sea it makes a rosy path, as if the sacred tread were fresh upon

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the water. A few more moments, and it sinks, and night comes on, and lights begin to sparkle in the prospect. On the hill-side beyond the shapelessly diffused town, and in the quiet keeping of the trees that gird the village steeple, remembrances are cut in stone, planted in common flowers, growing in grass, entwined with lowly brambles around many a mound of earth. In town and village, there are doors and windows closed against the weather, there are flaming logs heaped high, there are joyful faces, there is healthy music of voices. Be all ungentleness and harm excluded from the temples of the Household Gods, but be those remembrances admitted with tender encouragement! They are of the time and all its comforting and peaceful reassurances; and of the history that reunited even upon earth the living and the dead; and of the broad beneficence and goodness that too many men have tried to tear to narrow shreds.

THE POOR RELATION'S STORY

He was very reluctant to take precedence of so many respected members of the family, by beginning the round of stories they were to relate as they sat in a goodly circle by the Christmas fire; and he modestly suggested that it would be more correct if "John our esteemed host" (whose health he begged to drink) would have the kindness to begin. For as to himself, he said, he was so little used to lead the way that really — but as they all cried out here that he must begin, and agreed with one voice that he might, could, would, and should begin, he left off rubbing his hands, and took his legs out from under his arm-chair, and did begin.

I have no doubt (said the poor relation) that I shall surprise the assembled members of our family, and particularly John, our esteemed host, to whom we are so much indebted for the great hospitality with which he has this day entertained us, by the confession I am going to make. But if you do me the honour to be surprised at anything that falls from a person so unimportant in the family as I am, I can only say that I shall be scrupulously accurate in all I relate.

I am not what I am supposed to be. I am quite another thing. Perhaps, before I go further, I had better glance at what I *am* supposed to be.

It is supposed, unless I mistake, — the assembled members of our family will correct me if I do, which is very likely (here the poor relation looked mildly about him for contradiction), — that I am nobody's enemy but my own. That I never met with any particular success in anything. That I failed in business because I was unbusiness-like and credulous — in not being prepared for the interested designs of my partner. That I failed in love, because I was ridiculously trustful — in thinking it impossible that Christiana could deceive me. That I failed in my expectations from my uncle Chill, on account of not being as sharp as he could have wished in worldly matters. That, through life, I have been rather put upon and disap-

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t the baby! This is the gentleman who, people say, is no-ody's enemy but his own. This is the gentleman who can't ay no. This is the gentleman who was making such large rofits in his business that he must needs take a partner, t' other lay. This is the gentleman who is going to marry a wife with-ut a penny, and who falls into the hands of Jezebels who are peculating on my death!"

I knew, now, how great my uncle's rage was; for nothing hort of his being almost beside himself would have induced him to utter that concluding word, which he held in such repugnance that it was never spoken or hinted at before him on any account.

"On my death," he repeated, as if he were defying me by defying his own abhorrence of the word. "On my death — death — Death! But I'll spoil the speculation. Eat your last under this roof, you feeble wretch, and may it choke you!"

You may suppose that I had not much appetite for the break-fast to which I was bidden in these terms; but I took my accustomed seat. I saw that I was repudiated henceforth by my uncle; still, I could bear that very well, possessing Chris-tiana's heart.

He emptied his basin of bread and milk as usual, only that he took it on his knees with his chair turned away from the table where I sat. When he had done, he carefully snuffed out the candle; and the cold, slate-coloured, miserable day looked in upon us.

"Now, Mr. Michael," said he, "before we part, I should like to have a word with these ladies in your presence."

"As you will, sir," I returned; "but you [illegible] and wrong us, cruelly, if you suppose that there [illegible] at stake in this contract but [illegible]"

To this, he only replied, "[illegible]"

We went, through half-thawed snow [illegible] the house where Christiana and her [illegible] knew them very well. They were [illegible] and were surprised to see us at that [illegible]

"Your servant, ma'am," [illegible] divine the purpose of my [illegible] stand there is a [illegible] cooped up here. I am [illegible]

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it complete. I bring you your son-in-law, ma'am — and your husband, miss. The gentleman is a perfect strange me, but I wish him joy of his wise bargain."

He snarled at me as he went out, and I never saw him ag

It is altogether a mistake (continued the poor relation suppose that my dear Christiana, over-persuaded and influe by her mother, married a rich man, the dirt from whose car wheels is often, in these changed times, thrown upon me as rides by. No, no. She married me.

The way we came to be married rather sooner than intended was this. I took a frugal lodging and was sa and planning for her sake, when, one day, she spoke to me great earnestness, and said: —

"My dear Michael, I have given you my heart. I have that I loved you, and I have pledged myself to be your I am as much yours through all changes of good and ev if we had been married on the day when such words pa between us. I know you well, and know that if we should separated and our union broken off, your whole life would shadowed, and all that might, even now, be stronger in character for the conflict with the world would then be w ened to the shadow of what it is!"

"God help me, Christiana!" said I. "You speak truth."

"Michael!" said she, putting her hand in mine, in maidenly devotion, "let us keep apart no longer. It is for me to say that I can live contented upon such means as have, and I well know you are happy. I say so from heart. Strive no more alone; let us strive together. My Michael, it is not right that I should keep secret from you you do not suspect, but what distresses my whole life. mother, without considering that what you have lost, you l lost for me, and on the assurance of my faith, sets her hear riches, and urges another suit upon me, to my misery. I ca bear this, for to bear it is to be untrue to you. I would ra share your struggles than look on. I want no better home t you can give me. I know that you will aspire and labour a higher courage if I am wholly yours, and let it be so w you will!"

I was blest, indeed, that day, and a new world opened to

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view; and, honourably seeking it, and fully trusting one another, and having but one interest, ours will be a prosperous and happy partnership."

"I am sure of it!" returned John Spatter. And we shook hands most affectionately.

I took John home to my Castle, and we had a very happy day. Our partnership throve well. My friend and partner supplied what I wanted, as I had foreseen that he would; and, by improving both the business and myself, amply acknowledged any little rise in life to which I had helped him.

I am not (said the poor relation, looking at the fire as he slowly rubbed his hands) very rich, for I never cared to be that; but I have enough, and am above all moderate wants and anxieties. My Castle is not a splendid place, but it is very comfortable, and it has a warm and cheerful air, and is quite a picture of Home.

Our eldest girl, who is very like her mother, married John Spatter's eldest son. Our two families are closely united in other ties of attachment. It is very pleasant of an evening, when we are all assembled together — which frequently happens — and when John and I talk over old times, and the one interest there has always been between us.

I really do not know, in my Castle, what loneliness is. Some of our children or grandchildren are always about it, and the young voices of my descendants are delightful — oh, how delightful! — to me to hear. My dearest and most devoted wife, ever faithful, ever loving, ever helpful and sustaining and consoling, is the priceless blessing of my house; from whom all its other blessings spring. We are rather a musical family, and when Christiana sees me, at any time, a little weary or depressed, she steals to the piano and sings a gentle air she used to sing when we were first betrothed. So weak a man am I, that I cannot bear to hear it from any other source. They played it once, at the Theatre, when I was there with Little Frank; and the child said, wondering, "Cousin Michael, whose hot tears are these that have fallen on my hand!"

Such is my Castle, and such are the real particulars of my life therein preserved. I often take Little Frank home there. He is very welcome to my grandchildren, and they play together. At this time of the year — the Christmas and New

it complete. I bring you your son-in-law, ma'am — and you, your husband, miss. The gentleman is a perfect stranger to me, but I wish him joy of his wise bargain."

He snarled at me as he went out, and I never saw him again.

It is altogether a mistake (continued the poor relation) to suppose that my dear Christiana, over-persuaded and influenced by her mother, married a rich man, the dirt from whose carriage wheels is often, in these changed times, thrown upon me as she rides by. No, no. She married me.

The way we came to be married rather sooner than we intended was this. I took a frugal lodging and was saving and planning for her sake, when, one day, she spoke to me with great earnestness, and said: —

"My dear Michael, I have given you my heart. I have said that I loved you, and I have pledged myself to be your wife. I am as much yours through all changes of good and evil as if we had been married on the day when such words passed between us. I know you well, and know that if we should be separated and our union broken off, your whole life would be shadowed, and all that might, even now, be stronger in your character for the conflict with the world would then be weakened to the shadow of what it is!"

"God help me, Christiana!" said I. "You speak the truth."

"Michael!" said she, putting her hand in mine, in all maidenly devotion, "let us keep apart no longer. It is but for me to say that I can live contented upon such means as you have, and I well know you are happy. I say so from my heart. Strive no more alone; let us strive together. My dear Michael, it is not right that I should keep secret from you what you do not suspect, but what distresses my whole life. My mother, without considering that what you have lost, you have lost for me, and on the assurance of my faith, sets her heart on riches, and urges another suit upon me, to my misery. I cannot bear this, for to bear it is to be untrue to you. I would rather share your struggles than look on. I want no better home than you can give me. I know that you will aspire and labour with a higher courage if I am wholly yours, and let it be so when you will!"

I was blest, indeed, that day, and a new world opened to me.

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me in that capacity, and thought it an act of justice soon to make me your partner."

"Still less worth mentioning than any of those other little circumstances you have recalled, John Spatter," said I; "for I was, and am, sensible of your merits and my deficiencies."

"Now, my good friend," said John, drawing my arm through his, as he had had a habit of doing at school; while two vessels outside the windows of our counting-house — which were shaped like the stern windows of a ship — went lightly down the river with the tide, as John and I might then be sailing away in company, and in trust and confidence, on our voyage of life; "let there, under these friendly circumstances, be a right understanding between us. You are too easy, Michael. You are nobody's enemy but your own. If I were to give you that damaging character among our connection, with a shrug, and a shake of the head, and a sigh; and if I were further to abuse the trust you place in me — "

"But you never will abuse it at all, John," I observed.

"Never!" said he, "but I am putting a case — I say, and if I were further to abuse that trust by keeping this piece of our common affairs in the dark, and this other piece in the light, and again this other piece in the twilight, and so on, I should strengthen my strength, and weaken your weakness, day by day, until at last I found myself on the high-road to fortune, and you left behind on some bare common, a hopeless number of miles out of the way."

"Exactly so," said I.

"To prevent this, Michael," said John Spatter, "or the remotest chance of this, there must be perfect openness between us. Nothing must be concealed, and we must have but one interest."

"My dear John Spatter," I assured him, "that is precisely what I mean."

"And when you are too easy," pursued John, his face glowing with friendship, "you must allow me to prevent that imperfection in your nature from being taken advantage of by any one; you must not expect me to humour it — "

"My dear John Spatter," I interrupted, "I *don't* expect you to humour it. I want to correct it."

"And I, too!" said John.

"Exactly so!" cried I. "We both have the same end in

he traveller lost them one day, as he had lost the rest riends, and, after calling to them to come back, which 'er did, went on upon his journey. So he went on for rhile without seeing anything, until at last he came to a ged gentleman. So he said to the gentleman, "What doing here?" And his answer was, "I am always Come and be busy with me!"

began to be very busy with that gentleman, and they through the wood together. The whole journey was a wood, only it had been open and green at first, like in spring; and now began to be thick and dark, like a summer; some of the little trees that had come out were even turning brown. The gentleman was not it had a lady of about the same age with him, who was e; and they had children, who were with them too. all went on together through the wood, cutting down s, and making a path through the branches and the aves, and carrying burdens, and working hard.

imes they came to a long green avenue that opened per woods. Then they would hear a very little distant ring, "Father, father, I am another child! Stop for And presently they would see a very little figure, grower as it came along, running to join them. When it), they all crowded round it, and kissed and welcomed then they all went on together.

times they came to several avenues at once, and then stood still, and one of the children said, "Father, I am sea," and another said, "Father, I am going to India," ther, "Father, I am going to seek my fortune where I d another, "Father, I am going to heaven!" So with ars at parting, they went, solitary, down those avenues, ild upon its way; and the child who went to heaven) the golden air and vanished.

iever these partings happened, the traveller looked at tleman, and saw him glance up at the sky above the here the day was beginning to decline, and the sunset on. He saw, too, that his hair was turning grey. y never could rest long, for they had their journey to , and it was necessary for them to be always busy.

st, there had been so many partings that there were no left, and only the traveller, the gentleman, and the

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lady went upon their way in company. And now the was yellow; and now brown; and the leaves, even of the trees, began to fall.

So they came to an avenue that was darker than the rest were pressing forward on their journey without looking it, when the lady stopped.

"My husband," said the lady. "I am called."

They listened, and they heard a voice, a long way down avenue, say, "Mother, mother!"

It was the voice of the first child who had said, "I am to heaven!" and the father said, "I pray not yet. The is very near. I pray not yet!"

But the voice cried, "Mother, mother!" without mi him, though his hair was now quite white, and tears we his face.

Then the mother, who was already drawn into the sha the dark avenue, and moving away with her arms still r his neck, kissed him, and said, "My dearest, I am summ and I go!" And she was gone. And the traveller an were left alone together.

And they went on and on together, until they came to near the end of the wood; so near, that they could se sunset shining red before them through the trees.

Yet, once more, while he broke his way among the bran the traveller lost his friend. He called and called, but was no reply; and when he passed out of the wood, and sa peaceful sun going down upon a wide purple prospect, he to an old man sitting on a fallen tree. So he said to th man, "What do you do here?" And the old man said w calm smile, "I am always remembering. Come and reme with me!"

So the traveller sat down by the side of that old man, to face with the serene sunset; and all his friends came back and stood around him. The beautiful child, the h some boy, the young man in love, the father, mother, children; every one of them was there, and he had lost n So he loved them all, and was kind and forbearing with all, and was always pleased to watch them all, and the honoured and loved him. And I think the traveller mu yourself, dear Grandfather, because this is what you do t and what we do to you.

THE SCHOOLBOY'S STORY

Being rather young at present — I am getting on in years, but still I am rather young — I have no particular adventures of my own to fall back upon. It would n't much interest anybody here, I suppose, to know what a screw the Reverend is, or what a griffin *she* is, or how they do stick it into parents — particularly hair-cutting and medical attendance. One of our fellows was charged in his half's account twelve and sixpence for two pills, — tolerably profitable at six and threepence apiece, I should think, — and he never took them either, but put them up the sleeve of his jacket.

As to the beef, it 's shameful. It 's *not* beef. Regular beef is n't veins. You can chew regular beef. Besides which, there 's gravy to regular beef, and you never see a drop to ours. Another of our fellows went home ill, and heard the family doctor tell his father that he could n't account for his complaint unless it was the beer. Of course it was the beer, and well it might be!

However, beef and Old Cheeseman are two different things. So is beer. It was Old Cheeseman I meant to tell about; not the manner in which our fellows get their constitutions destroyed for the sake of profit.

Why, look at the pie-crust alone. There 's no flakiness in it. It 's solid — like damp lea. Then our fellows get nightmares, and are bolstered for calling out and waking other fellows. Who can wonder!

Old Cheeseman one night walked in his sleep, put [illegible] over his nightcap, got hold of a fishing-rod and a [illegible] and went down into the parlour, where they [illegible] from his appearance he was a Ghost. [illegible] have done that, if his meals had been [illegible] all begin to walk in our sleeps, I suppose [illegible]

Old Cheeseman was n't second Latin Master [illegible] fellow himself. He was first [illegible] post-chaise, by a woman who was always [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] was made second Latin Mast[illegible] at the beginning of a [illegible] in that capacity as "Mr [illegible] agreed that Old Cheese[illegible]

r, and a deserter, who had gone over to the enemy's camp, sold himself for gold. It was no excuse for him that he sold himself for very little gold — two pound ten a quarter his washing, as was reported. It was decided by a Parnt which sat about it, that Old Cheeseman's mercenary es could alone be taken into account, and that he had ed our blood for drachmas." The Parliament took the ssion out of the quarrel scene between Brutus and Cassius. ien it was settled in this strong way that Old Cheeseman tremendous traitor, who had wormed himself into our s' secrets on purpose to get himself into favour by giving erything he knew, all courageous fellows were invited to forward and enroll themselves in a Society for making a ainst him. The President of the Society was First boy, l Bob Tarter. His father was in the West Indies, and rned, himself, that his father was worth Millions. He reat power among our fellows, and he wrote a parody, ning, —

> "Who made believe to be so meek
> That we could hardly hear him speak,
> Yet turned out an Informing Sneak?
> Old Cheeseman."

d on in that way through more than a dozen verses, which ed to go and sing, every morning, close by the new masdesk. He trained one of the low boys too, a rosy-cheeked Brass who did n't care what he did, to go up to him with atin Grammar one morning, and say it so: *Nominativus ominum* — Old Cheeseman, *raro exprimitur* — was never cted, *nisi distinctionis* — of being an informer, *aut emis gratia* — until he proved one. *Ut* — for instance, *Vos astis* — when he sold the boys. *Quasi* — as though, — he should say, *Pretærea nemo* — I 'm a Judas! All roduced a great effect on Old Cheeseman. He had never nuch hair; but what he had, began to get thinner and r every day. He grew paler and more worn; and someof an evening he was seen sitting at his desk with a us long snuff to his candle, and his hands before his face, . But no member of the Society could pity him, even if lt inclined, because the President said it was Old Cheeseconscience.

Old Cheeseman went on, and did n't he lead a miserable

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life! Of course the Reverend turned up his nose at h of course *she* did,—because both of them always do th the masters,—but he suffered from the fellows most, suffered from them constantly. He never told about the Society could find out; but he got no credit f because the President said it was Old Cheeseman's cowa

He had only one friend in the world, and that almost as powerless as he was, for it was only Jane was a sort of wardrobe-woman to our fellows, and took the boxes. She had come at first, I believe, as a kin prentice,—some of our fellows say from a Charity, but know,—and after her time was out, had stopped at so year. So little a year, perhaps I ought to say, for more likely. However, she had put some pounds in ings' Bank, and she was a very nice young woman. not quite pretty; but she had a very frank, honest, bri and all our fellows were fond of her. She was unco neat and cheerful, and uncommonly comfortable and kin if anything was the matter with a fellow's mother, h went and showed the letter to Jane.

Jane was Old Cheeseman's friend. The more the went against him, the more Jane stood by him. She give him a good-humoured look out of her still-room sometimes, that seemed to set him up for the day to pass out of the orchard and the kitchen-garden (alw locked, I believe you!) through the playground, w might have gone the other way, only to give a turn head, as much as to say, "Keep up your spirits!" Cheeseman. His slip of a room was so fresh and orde it was well known who looked after it while he wa desk; and when our fellows saw a smoking hot dump his plate at dinner, they knew with indignation who it up.

Under these circumstances, the Society resolved, quantity of meeting and debating, that Jane should quested to cut Old Cheeseman dead; and that if she she must be sent to Coventry herself. So a deputation by the President, was appointed to wait on Jane, and her of the vote the Society had been under the painf sity of passing. She was very much respected for all qualities, and there was a story about her having once

a spy, and a deserter, who had gone over to the enemy's camp, and sold himself for gold. It was no excuse for him that he had sold himself for very little gold — two pound ten a quarter and his washing, as was reported. It was decided by a Parliament which sat about it, that Old Cheeseman's mercenary motives could alone be taken into account, and that he had "coined our blood for drachmas." The Parliament took the expression out of the quarrel scene between Brutus and Cassius.

When it was settled in this strong way that Old Cheeseman was a tremendous traitor, who had wormed himself into our fellows' secrets on purpose to get himself into favour by giving up everything he knew, all courageous fellows were invited to come forward and enroll themselves in a Society for making a set against him. The President of the Society was First boy, named Bob Tarter. His father was in the West Indies, and he owned, himself, that his father was worth Millions. He had great power among our fellows, and he wrote a parody, beginning, —

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So Old Cheeseman went on, and did n't he lead a miserable

life! Of course the Reverend turned up his nose at him, of course *she* did, — because both of them always do that, the masters, — but he suffered from the fellows most, and suffered from them constantly. He never told about it, the Society could find out; but he got no credit for because the President said it was Old Cheeseman's cowardice.

He had only one friend in the world, and that one almost as powerless as he was, for it was only Jane. was a sort of wardrobe-woman to our fellows, and took care the boxes. She had come at first, I believe, as a kind of prentice, — some of our fellows say from a Charity, but *I* d know, — and after her time was out, had stopped at so much year. So little a year, perhaps I ought to say, for it is more likely. However, she had put some pounds in the Savings' Bank, and she was a very nice young woman. She not quite pretty; but she had a very frank, honest, bright face and all our fellows were fond of her. She was uncommonly neat and cheerful, and uncommonly comfortable and kind. if anything was the matter with a fellow's mother, he always went and showed the letter to Jane.

Jane was Old Cheeseman's friend. The more the Society went against him, the more Jane stood by him. She used to give him a good-humoured look out of her still-room window, sometimes, that seemed to set him up for the day. She used to pass out of the orchard and the kitchen-garden (always kept locked, I believe you!) through the playground, when she might have gone the other way, only to give a turn of her head, as much as to say, "Keep up your spirits!" to Old Cheeseman. His slip of a room was so fresh and orderly, that it was well known who looked after it while he was at his desk; and when our fellows saw a smoking hot dumpling on his plate at dinner, they knew with indignation who had sent it up.

Under these circumstances, the Society resolved, after a quantity of meeting and debating, that Jane should be requested to cut Old Cheeseman dead; and that if she refused she must be sent to Coventry herself. So a deputation, headed by the President, was appointed to wait on Jane, and inform her of the vote the Society had been under the painful necessity of passing. She was very much respected for all her good qualities, and there was a story about her having once waylai

At the close of his observations he would make a signal to a Prizefighter concealed in the passage, who would then appear and pitch into the Reverend till he was left insensible. Old Cheeseman would then make Jane a present of from five to ten pounds, and would leave the establishment in fiendish triumph.

The President explained that against the parlour part, or the Jane part, of these arrangements he had nothing to say, but, on the part of the Society, he counselled deadly resistance. With this view he recommended that all available desks should be filled with stones, and that the first word of the complaint should be the signal to every fellow to let fly at Old Cheeseman. The bold advice put the Society in better spirits, and was unanimously taken. A post about Old Cheeseman's size was put up in the playground, and all our fellows practised at it till it was dinted all over.

When the day came, and Places were called, every fellow sat down in a tremble. There had been much discussing and disputing as to how Old Cheeseman would come; but it was the general opinion that he would appear in a sort of triumphal car drawn by four horses, with two livery servants in front, and the Prizefighter in disguise up behind. So all our fellows sat listening for the sound of wheels. But no wheels were heard, for Old Cheeseman walked after all, and came into the school without any preparation. Pretty much as he used to be, only dressed in black.

"Gentlemen," said the Reverend, presenting him, "our so long respected friend and fellow-pilgrim in the pleasant plains of knowledge is desirous to offer a word or two. Attention, gentlemen, one and all."

Every fellow stole his hand into his desk and looked at the President. The President was all ready, and taking aim at Old Cheeseman with his eyes.

What did Old Cheeseman then, but walk [illegible] look round him with a queer smile as if [illegible] eye, and begin in a quavering mild [illegible] and old friends!"

Every fellow's hand came [illegible] suddenly began to cry.

"My dear companions [illegible] "you have heard of my [illegible] years under this roof — my [illegible]

[illegible] so long our [illegible] in the pleasant plains of [illegible] I dare say! Much of [illegible] disinherited young lady who [illegible] father's wish, and whose young hus[illegible] sorrow herself, and whose [illegible] brought up at the [illegible] never consent to see it, baby, [illegible] grandfather was now dead and serve him [illegible] — and which grandfather's large [illegible] was now, and all of a sudden [illegible] respected friend [illegible] pleasant plains of knowledge, the [illegible] by saying, [illegible] that day fortnight, when [illegible] himself in a more particular manner. [illegible] he stared severely round at our [illegible]

There was great consternation among the members of the Society, [illegible] wanted to resign, and lots more began [illegible] that they had never belonged to it. However, the President stuck up, and said that they must stand [illegible], and that if a breach was made it should be [illegible] — which was meant to encourage the Society, [illegible]. The President further said he would consider the position in which they stood, and would give them his best opinion [illegible] in a few days. This was eagerly looked for, as he knew a good deal of the world on account of his father's being in the West Indies.

After days and days of hard thinking, and drawing armies all over his slate, the President called our fellows together, and made the matter clear. He said it was plain that when Old Cheeseman came on the appointed day, his first revenge would be to impeach the Society, and have it flogged all round. After witnessing with joy the torture of his enemies and gloating over the cries which agony would extort from them, the probability was that he would invite the Reverend, on pretence of conversation, into a private room, — say the parlour into which Parents were shown, where the two great globes were which were never used, — and would there reproach him with the various frauds and oppressions he had endured at his hands.

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What did Old Cheeseman then, but walk up to his old desk, look round him with a queer smile as if there was a tear in his eye, and begin in a quavering mild voice, "My dear companions and old friends!"

Every fellow's hand came out of his desk, and the President suddenly began to cry.

"My dear companions and old friends," said Old Cheeseman, "you have heard of my good fortune. I have passed so many years under this roof — my entire life so far, I may say — that

I hope you have been glad to hear of it for my sake. I could never enjoy it without exchanging congratulations with you. If we have ever misunderstood one another at all, pray, my dear boys, let us forgive and forget. I have a great tenderness for you, and I am sure you return it. I want in the fulness of a grateful heart to shake hands with you every one. I have come back to do it, if you please, my dear boys."

Since the President had begun to cry, several other fellows had broken out here and there; but now, when Old Cheeseman began with him as first boy, laid his left hand affectionately on his shoulder and gave him his right; and when the President said, "Indeed I don't deserve it, sir; upon my honour I don't," there was sobbing and crying all over the school. Every other fellow said he did n't deserve it, much in the same way; but Old Cheeseman, not minding that a bit, went cheerfully round to every boy, and wound up with every master — finishing off the Reverend last.

Then a snivelling little chap in a corner, who was always under some punishment or other, set up a shrill cry of "Success to Old Cheeseman! Hooray!" The Reverend glared upon him, and said, "*Mr.* Cheeseman, Sir." But Old Cheeseman protesting that he liked his old name a great deal better than his new one, all our fellows took up the cry; and for I don't know how many minutes, there was such a thundering of feet and hands, and such a roaring of Old Cheeseman, as never was heard.

After that there was a spread in the dining-room of the most magnificent kind. Fowls, tongues, preserves, fruits, confectioneries, jellies, neguses, barley-sugar temples, trifles, crackers — eat all you can and pocket what you like — all at Old Cheeseman's expense. After that, speeches, whole holiday, double and treble sets of all manners of things for all manners of games, donkeys, pony-chaises and drive yourself, dinner for all the masters at the Seven Bells (twenty pounds a head our fellows estimated it at), an annual holiday and feast fixed for that day every year, and another on Old Cheeseman's birthday — Reverend bound down before the fellows to allow it, so that he could never back out — all at Old Cheeseman's expense.

And did n't our fellows go down in a body and cheer outside the Seven Bells? Oh, no!

But there's something else besides. Don't look at the next

story-teller, for there 's more yet. Next day it was resolved that the Society should make it up with Jane, and then be dissolved. What do you think of Jane being gone, though! "What? Gone for ever?" said our fellows, with long faces. "Yes, to be sure," was all the answer they could get. None of the people about the house would say anything more. At length, the first boy took upon himself to ask the Reverend whether our old friend Jane was really gone? The Reverend (he has got a daughter at home — turn-up nose, and red) replied severely, "Yes, sir, Miss Pitt is gone." The idea of calling Jane, Miss Pitt! Some said she had been sent away in disgrace for taking money from Old Cheeseman; others said she had gone into Old Cheeseman's service at a rise of ten pounds a year. All that our fellows knew was, she was gone.

It was two or three months afterwards, when, one afternoon, an open carriage stopped at the cricket-field, just outside bounds, with a lady and gentleman in it, who looked at the game a long time, and stood up to see it played. Nobody thought much about them, until the same little snivelling chap came in, against all rules, from the post where he was Scout, and said, "It 's Jane!" Both Elevens forgot the game directly, and ran crowding round the carriage. It *was* Jane! In such a bonnet! And if you 'll believe me, Jane was married to Old Cheeseman.

It soon became quite a regular thing, when our fellows were hard at it in the playground, to see a carriage at the low part of the wall where it joins the high part, and a lady and gentleman standing up in it, looking over. The gentleman was always Old Cheeseman, and the lady was always Jane.

The first time I ever saw them, I saw them in that way. There had been a good many changes among our fellows then, and it had turned out that Bob Tarter's father was n't worth Millions! He was n't worth anything. Bob had gone for a soldier, and Old Cheeseman had purchased his discharge. But that 's not the carriage. The carriage stopped, and all our fellows stopped as soon as it was seen.

"So you have never sent me to Coventry after all!" said the lady, laughing, as our fellows swarmed up the wall to shake hands with her. "Are you never going to do it?"

"Never, never, never!" on all sides.

I did n't understand what she meant then, but of course I do now. I was very much pleased with her face, though, and with

[redacted]

return for the money I pay over," — for the Bigwig fa
were not above his money, — "I shall be relieved and m
obliged, considering that you know best." Hence the di
ming, trumpeting, and speechmaking, and the ugly image
horses which he was expected to fall down and worship.

"I don't understand all this," said he, rubbing his furro
brow confusedly. "But it *has* a meaning, maybe, if I c
find it out."

"It means," returned the Bigwig family, suspecting s
thing of what he said, "honour and glory in the highest, to
highest merit."

"Oh!" said he. And he was glad to hear that.

But when he looked among the images in iron, ma
bronze, and brass, he failed to find a rather meritorious c
tryman of his, once the son of a Warwickshire wood-de
or any single countryman whomsoever of that kind. He c
find none of the men whose knowledge had rescued him and
children from terrific and disfiguring disease, whose bold
had raised his forefathers from the condition of serfs, w
wise fancy had opened a new and high existence to the l
blest, whose skill had filled the working-man's world
accumulated wonders. Whereas, he did find others whom
knew no good of, and even others whom he knew much i

"Humph!" said he. "I don't quite understand it."

So he went home, and sat down by his fireside to get it
of his mind.

Now his fireside was a bare one, all hemmed in by black
streets; but it was a precious place to him. The hands of
wife were hardened with toil, and she was old before her t
but she was dear to him. His children, stunted in their gro
bore traces of unwholesome nurture; but they had beaut
his sight. Above all other things, it was an earnest desi
this man's soul that his children should be taught. "If I
sometimes misled," said he, "for want of knowledge, at
let them know better, and avoid my mistakes. If it is har
me to reap the harvest of pleasure and instruction that is st
in books, let it be easier to them."

But the Bigwig family broke out into violent family qua
concerning what it was lawful to teach to this man's chil
Some of the family insisted on such a thing being primary
indispensable above all other things; and others of the fa

[illegible] He saw his daughter perverted into a [illegible] he saw his son go moping down the [illegible] to brutality and crime, he saw the [illegible] in the eyes of his babes so chan[illegible] suspicion that he could have rather wished [illegible]

[illegible] this any the better," said he, "but I [illegible] right. Nay, by the clouded Heaven above [illegible] this as my wrong!"

[illegible] again (for his passion was usually short [illegible] kind), he looked about him on his Sun[illegible], and he saw how much monotony and weari[illegible], and thence how drunkenness arose with all its [illegible]. Then he appealed to the Bigwig family, and "We are a labouring people, and I have a glimmering [illegible] in me that labouring people of whatever condition [illegible] — by a higher intelligence than yours, as I poorly [illegible] it — to be in need of mental refreshment and recrea[illegible]. See what we fall into, when we rest without it. Come! [illegible]e me harmlessly, show me something, give me an escape!" [illegible] here the Bigwig family fell into a state of uproar almost deafening. When some few voices were faintly heard, [illegible]sing to show him the wonders of the world, the greatness [illegible]ation, the mighty changes of time, the workings of [illegible]

[redacted]

affrighted ears, "by what was meant to be an innocent req plainly arising out of my familiar experience, and the co knowledge of all men who choose to open their eyes' don't understand, and I am not understood. What is to of such a state of things!"

He was bending over his work, often asking himsel question, when the news began to spread that a pestilence appeared among the labourers, and was slaying them by sands. Going forth to look about him, he soon found t be true. The dying and the dead were mingled in the and tainted houses among which his life was passed. poison was distilled into the always murky, always sick air. The robust and the weak, old age and infancy, the f and the mother, all were stricken down alike.

What means of flight had he? He remained there, he was, and saw those who were dearest to him die. A preacher came to him, and would have said some praye soften his heart in his gloom, but he replied: —

"Oh, what avails it, missionary, to come to me, a man demned to residence in this fœtid place, where every bestowed upon me for my delight becomes a torment, where every minute of my numbered days is new mire to the heap under which I lie oppressed! But give me first glimpse of Heaven, through a little of its light and give me pure water; help me to be clean; lighten this atmosphere and heavy life, in which our spirits sink, an become the indifferent and callous creatures you too ofte us, gently and kindly take the bodies of those who die a us, out of the small room where we grow to be so familiar the awful change that even ITS sanctity is lost to us. Teacher, then I will hear — none know better than you willingly — of Him whose thoughts were so much with poor, and who had compassion for all human sorrow!"

He was at his work again, solitary and sad, when his m came and stood near to him dressed in black. He, als suffered heavily. His young wife, his beautiful and young wife, was dead; so, too, his only child.

"Master, 't is hard to bear — I know it — but be comf I would give you comfort, if I could."

The master thanked him from his heart, but, said he you labouring men! The calamity began among you. If

had but lived more healthily and decently, I should no widowed and bereft mourner that I am this day."

"Master," returned the other, shaking his head, ' begun to understand a little that most calamities from us, as this one did, and that none will stop doors, until we are united with that great squabl ronder, to do the things that are right. We ealthily and decently, unless they who undertook s provide the means. We cannot be instructed rill teach us; we cannot be rationally amused, unle muse us; we cannot but ha some false gods hile they set up so many of heirs in all the pu he evil consequences of im ect instruction, the e quences of pernicious negle the evil consequences tural restraint and the denia f humanising enjoymen l come from us, and none of them will stop with us. ill spread far and wide. They always do; they always ne — just like the pestilence. I understand so much, I ink, at last."

But the master said again, "O you labouring men! How ldom do we ever hear of you, except in connection with some ouble!"

"Master," he replied, "I am Nobody, and little likely to heard of (nor yet much wanted to be heard of, perhaps), cept when there *is* some trouble. But it never begins with e, and it never can end with me. As sure as Death, it comes own to me, and it goes up from me."

There was so much reason in what he said that the Bigwig mily, getting wind of it, and being horribly frightened by the te desolation, resolved to unite with him to do the things that ere right — at all events, so far as the said things were associated with the direct prevention, humanly speaking, of another stilence. But as their fear wore off, which it soon began to , they resumed their falling out among themselves, and d nothing. Consequently the scourge appeared again — low own as before — and spread avengingly upward as before, and rried off vast numbers of the brawlers. But not a man among em ever admitted, if in the least degree he ever perceived, that had anything to do with it.

So Nobody lived and died in the old, old, old way; and this, the main, is the whole of Nobody's story.

[redacted]

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The master thanked him from his heart, but, said you labouring men! The calamity began among you.

Had he no name, you ask? Perhaps it was Legion. It matters little what his name was. Let us call him Legion.

If you were ever in the Belgian villages near the field of Waterloo, you will have seen, in some quiet little church, a monument erected by faithful companions in arms to the memory of Colonel A, Major B, Captains C, D, and E, Lieutenants F and G, Ensigns H, I, and J, seven non-commissioned officers, and one hundred and thirty rank and file, who fell in the discharge of their duty on the memorable day. The story of Nobody is the story of the rank and file of the earth. They bear their share of the battle; they have their part in the victory; they fall; they leave no name but in the mass. The march of the proudest of us leads to the dusty way by which they go. Oh! Let us think of them this year at the Christmas fire, and not forget them when it is burnt out.

had but lived more healthily and decently, I should not be the widowed and bereft mourner that I am this day."

"Master," returned the other, shaking his head, "I have begun to understand a little that most calamities will come from us, as this one did, and that none will stop at our poor doors, until we are united with that great squabbling family yonder, to do the things that are right. We cannot live healthily and decently, unless they who undertook to manage us provide the means. We cannot be instructed unless they will teach us; we cannot be rationally amused, unless they will amuse us; we cannot but have some false gods of our own, while they set up so many of theirs in all the public places. The evil consequences of imperfect instruction, the evil consequences of pernicious neglect, the evil consequences of unnatural restraint and the denial of humanising enjoyments, will all come from us, and none of them will stop with us. They will spread far and wide. They always do; they always have done — just like the pestilence. I understand so much, I think, at last."

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There was so much reason in what he said that the Bigwig family, getting wind of it, and being horribly frightened by the late desolation, resolved to unite with him to do the things that were right — at all events, so far as the said things were associated with the direct prevention, humanly speaking, of another pestilence. But as their fear wore off, which it soon began to do, they resumed their falling out among themselves, and did nothing. Consequently the scourge appeared again — low down as before — and spread avengingly upward as before, and carried off vast numbers of the brawlers. But not a man among them ever admitted, if in the least degree he ever perceived, that he had anything to do with it.

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THE SEVEN POOR TRAVELLERS

CHAPTER I

IN THE OLD CITY OF ROCHESTER

[illegible]RICTLY speaking, there were only six Poor Travellers; being a Traveller myself, though an idle one, and being [illegible]d as poor as I hope to be, I brought the number up to [illegible]. This word of explanation is due at once, for what says [illegible]scription over the quaint old door?

RICHARD WATTS, Esq.,
by his Will, dated 22 Aug. 1579,
founded this Charity
for Six Poor Travellers,
who, not being ROGUES or PROCTORS,
May receive gratis for one Night
Lodging, Entertainment,
and Fourpence each.

[illegible] was in the ancient little city of Rochester in Kent, of all [illegible]ood days in the year upon a Christmas Eve, that I [illegible] [illegible]g this inscription over the quaint old door in question. I [illegible]een wandering about the neighbouring Cathedral, [illegible] the tomb of Richard Watts, with the effigy of [illegible] [illegible]r Richard starting out of it like a ship's [illegible] felt that I could do no less, as I gave the [illegible] inquire the way to Watts's Charity. The [illegible] and very plain. I had come [illegible] he quaint old door.

[illegible]Now," said I to myself, as I [illegible] I am not a Proctor; I wonder [illegible] [illegible]on the whole, though [illegible] [illegible] faces which might have had [illegible] [illegible]th than they had had for me, [illegible]

[redacted]

in that way, I came to the conclusion that I was not
So beginning to regard the establishment as in some
property, bequeathed to me and divers co-legatees, al
share alike, by the Worshipful Master Richard Watts, I
backward into the road to survey my inheritance.

I found it to be a clean, white house, of a staid and v
air, with the quaint old door already three times menti
arched door), choice little long low lattice windows, an
of three gables. The silent High-street of Rochester i
gables, with old beams and timbers carved into stran
It is oddly garnished with a queer old clock that proj
the pavement out of a grave red brick building, as
carried on business there, and hung out his sign. Sed
he did an active stroke of work in Rochester, in the old
the Romans, and the Saxons, and the Normans; and
the times of King John, when the rugged Castle — I
undertake to say how many hundreds of years old the
abandoned to the centuries of weather which have so
the dark apertures in its walls that the ruin looks a
rooks and daws had picked its eyes out.

I was very well pleased, both with my property and
tion. While I was yet surveying it with growing c
espied, at one of the upper lattices which stood open,
body, of a wholesome matronly appearance, whose eyes
inquiringly addressed to mine. They said so plainly, "
wish to see the house?" that I answered aloud, "Ye
please." And within a minute the old door opened, a
my head, and went down two steps into the entry.

"This," said the matronly presence, ushering me in
room on the right, "is where the Travellers sit by the
cook what bits of suppers they buy with their fourpen

"Oh! Then they have no Entertainment?" said I
the inscription over the outer door was still runnin
head, and I was mentally repeating, in a kind of tune,
ing, entertainment, and fourpence each."

"They have a fire provided for 'em," returned the
— a mighty civil person, not, as I could make out,
"and these cooking utensils. And this what's pain
board is the rules for their behaviour. They have th
pences when they get their tickets from the steward
way, — for I don't admit 'em myself, they must

tickets first, — and sometimes one buys a rasher of bacon, and another a herring, and another a pound of potatoes, or what not. Sometimes two or three of 'em will club their fourpences together, and make a supper that way. But not much of anything is to be got for fourpence, at present, when provisions is so dear."

"True, indeed," I remarked. I had been looking about the room, admiring its snug fireside at the upper end, its glimpse of the street through the low mullioned window, and its beams overhead. "It is very comfortable," said I.

"Ill-conwenient," observed the matronly presence.

I liked to hear her say so; for it showed a commendable anxiety to execute in no niggardly spirit the intentions of Master Richard Watts. But the room was really so well adapted to its purpose that I protested, quite enthusiastically, against her disparagement.

"Nay, ma'am," said I, "I am sure it is warm in winter and cool in summer. It has a look of homely welcome and soothing rest. It has a remarkably cosy fireside, the very blink of which, gleaming out into the street upon a winter night, is enough to warm all Rochester's heart. And as to the convenience of the Six Poor Travellers — "

"I don't mean them," returned the presence. "I speak of its being an ill-conwenience to myself and my daughter, having no other room to sit in of a night."

This was true enough, but there was another quaint room of corresponding dimensions on the opposite side of the entry: so I stepped across to it, through the open doors of both rooms, and asked what this chamber was for.

"This," returned the presence, "is the Board Room; where the gentlemen meet when they come here."

Let me see. I had counted from the street six upper windows besides these on the ground-story. Making a perplexed calculation in my mind, I rejoined, "Then the Six Poor Travellers sleep up stairs?"

My new friend shook her head. "They sleep," she answered, "in two little outer galleries at the back, where their beds has always been, ever since the Charity was founded. It being so very ill-conwenient to me as things is at present, the gentlemen are going to take off a bit of the backyard, and make a slip of a room for 'em there, to sit in before they go to bed."

"And then the Six Poor Travellers," said I, "will be out of the house?"

"Entirely out of the house," assented the presence, ably smoothing her hands. "Which is considered muc for all parties, and much more convenient."

I had been a little startled, in the Cathedral, by the with which the effigy of Master Richard Watts was out of his tomb; but I began to think, now, that it expected to come across the High-street some stormy ni make a disturbance here.

Howbeit, I kept my thoughts to myself, and accompan presence to the little galleries at the back. I found the tiny scale, like the galleries in old inn-yards; and the very clean. While I was looking at them, the matron to understand that the prescribed number of Poor Tr were forthcoming every night from year's end to year and that the beds were always occupied. My questio this, and her replies, brought us back to the Board R essential to the dignity of "the gentlemen," where she me the printed accounts of the Charity hanging up by th dow. From them I gathered that the greater part property bequeathed by the Worshipful Master Richard for the maintenance of this foundation was, at the period death, mere marsh-land; but that, in course of time, been reclaimed and built upon, and was very cons increased in value. I found, too, that about a thirtieth the annual revenue was now expended on the purpose memorated in the inscription over the door; the rest handsomely laid out in Chancery, law expenses, collect receivership, poundage, and other appendages of mana highly complimentary to the importance of the Six Po ellers. In short, I made the not entirely new discovery may be said of an establishment like this, in dear old E as of the fat oyster in the American story, that it takes many men to swallow it whole.

"And pray, ma'am," said I, sensible that the blank my face began to brighten as a thought occurred to me, one see these Travellers?"

"Well!" she returned dubiously, "no!"

"Not to-night, for instance?" said I.

ll!" she returned more positively, "no. Nobody ever
see them, and nobody ever did see them."
am not easily baulked in a design when I am set upon it,
to the good lady that this was Christmas Eve; that
as comes but once a year, — which is unhappily too true,
n it begins to stay with us the whole year round we
ake this earth a very different place; that I was pos-
y the desire to treat the Travellers to a supper and a
te glass of hot Wassail; that the voice of Fame had
ard in that land, declaring my ability to make hot Was-
at if I were permitted to hold the feast, I should be
onformable to reason, sobriety, and good hours; in a
at I could be merry and wise myself, and had been
own at a pinch to keep others so, although I was deco-
th no badge or medal, and was not a Brother, Orator,
Saint, or Prophet of any denomination whatever. In
I prevailed, to my great joy. It was settled that at
lock that night a Turkey and a piece of Roast Beef
moke upon the board; and that I, faint and unworthy
for once of Master Richard Watts, should preside at
istmas-supper, host of the Six Poor Travellers.
nt back to my inn to give the necessary directions for
rkey and Roast Beef, and, during the remainder of the
ıld settle to nothing for thinking of the Poor Travellers.
he wind blew hard against the windows, — it was a cold
th dark gusts of sleet alternating with periods of wild
ess, as if the year were dying fitfully, — I pictured them
ng towards their resting-place along various cold roads,
delighted to think how little they foresaw the supper
aited them. I painted their portraits in my mind, and
d in little heightening touches. I made them foot-sore;
them weary; I made them carry packs and bundles; I
nem stop by finger-posts and milestones, leaning on their
cks, and looking wistfully at what was written there; I
nem lose their way, and filled their five wits with appre-
s of lying out all night, and being frozen to death. I
my hat, and went out, climbed to the top of the Old
and looked over the windy hills that slope down to the
y, almost believing that I could descry some of my Trav-
n the distance. After it fell dark, and the Cathedral
s heard in the invisible steeple — quite a bower of frosty

tions were, so soon as he should hear the whistle blown, to dash into the kitchen, seize the hot plum-pudding and mince-pies, and speed with them to Watts's Charity, where they would be received (he was further instructed) by the sauce-female, who would be provided with brandy in a blue state of combustion.

All these arrangements were executed in the most exact and punctual manner. I never saw a finer turkey, finer beef, or greater prodigality of sauce and gravy; and my Travellers did wonderful justice to everything set before them. It made my heart rejoice to observe how their wind and frost hardened faces softened in the clatter of plates and knives and forks, and mellowed in the fire and supper heat. While their hats and caps and wrappers, hanging up, a few small bundles on the ground in a corner, and in another corner three or four old walking-sticks, worn down at the end to mere fringe, linked this snug interior with the bleak outside in a golden chain.

When supper was done, and my brown beauty had been elevated on the table, there was a general requisition to me to "take the corner;" which suggested to me comfortably enough how much my friends here made of a fire, — for when had I ever thought so highly of the corner, since the days when I connected it with Jack Horner? However, as I declined, Ben, whose touch on all convivial instruments is perfect, drew the table apart, and instructing my Travellers to open right and left on either side of me, and form round the fire, closed up the centre with myself and my chair, and preserved the order we had kept at table. He had already, in a tranquil manner, boxed the ears of the inattentive boys until they had been by imperceptible degrees boxed out of the room; and he now rapidly skirmished the sauce-female into the High-street, disappeared, and softly closed the door.

This was the time for bringing the poker to bear upon the billet of wood. I tapped it three times, like an enchanted talisman, and a brilliant host of merry-makers burst out of it, and sported off by the chimney, — rushing up the middle in a fiery country dance, and never coming down again. Meanwhile, by their sparkling light, which threw our lamp into the shade, I filled the glasses, and gave my Travellers, CHRISTMAS! — CHRISTMAS EVE, my friends, when the shepherds, who were Poor Travellers, too, in their way, heard the Angels sing, "On earth, peace. Good-will towards men!"

black suit, and apparently in very bad circumstances, with a dry, suspicious look; the absent buttons on his waistcoat eked out with red tape; and a bundle of extraordinarily tattered papers sticking out of an inner breast-pocket. Fifthly, a foreigner by birth, but an Englishman in speech, who carried his pipe in the band of his hat, and lost no time in telling me, in an easy, simple, engaging way, that he was a watchmaker from Geneva, and travelled all about the Continent, mostly on foot, working as a journeyman, and seeing new countries — possibly (I thought) also smuggling a watch or so, now and then. Sixthly, a little widow, who had been very pretty and was still very young, but whose beauty had been wrecked in some great misfortune, and whose manner was remarkably timid, scared, and solitary. Seventhly and lastly, a Traveller of a kind familiar to my boyhood, but now almost obsolete, — a Book Pedler, who had a quantity of Pamphlets and Numbers with him, and who presently boasted that he could repeat more verses in an evening than he could sell in a twelvemonth.

All these I have mentioned in the order in which they sat at table. I presided, and the matronly presence faced me. We were not long in taking our places, for the supper had arrived with me, in the following procession: —

Myself with the pitcher.
Ben with Beer.
Inattentive Boy with hot plates. Inattentive Boy with hot plates.
THE TURKEY.
Female carrying sauces to be heated on the spot.
THE BEEF.
Man with Tray on his head, containing Vegetables and Sundries.
Volunteer Hostler from Hotel, grinning,
And rendering no assistance.

As we passed along the High-street, [illegible]
ng tail of fragrance behind us which [illegible]
niffing in wonder. We had [illegible]
he inn-yard a wall-eyed young man [illegible]
epartment, and well accustomed [illegible]
histle which Ben always carries [illegible]

[redacted]

tions were, as soon as he should hear the whistle blown, into the kitchen, seize the hot plum-pudding and mince-pies, and speed with them to Watts's Charity, where they would be received (he was further instructed) by the sauce-female, who would be provided with brandy in a blue state of combustion.

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I don't know who was the first among us to think that we ought to take hands as we sat, in deference to the toast, or whether any one of us anticipated the others, but at any rate we all did it. We then drank to the memory of the good Master Richard Watts. And I wish his Ghost may never have had worse usage under that roof than it had from us.

It was the witching time for story-telling. "Our whole life, Travellers," said I, "is a story more or less intelligible,— generally less; but we shall read it by a clearer light when it is ended. I, for one, am so divided this night between fact and fiction that I scarce know which is which. Shall I beguile the time by telling you a story as we sit here?"

They all answered yes. I had little to tell them, but I was bound by my own proposal. Therefore, after looking for a while at the spiral column of smoke wreathing up from my brown beauty, through which I could have almost sworn I saw the effigy of Master Richard Watts, less startled than usual, I fired away.

CHAPTER II

THE STORY OF RICHARD DOUBLEDICK

In the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine, a relative of mine came limping down, on foot, to this town of Chatham. I call it this town, because if anybody present knows to a nicety where Rochester ends and Chatham begins, it is more than I do. He was a poor traveller, with not a farthing in his pocket. He sat by the fire in this very room, and he slept one night in a bed that will be occupied to-night by some one here.

My relative came down to Chatham to enlist in a cavalry regiment, if a cavalry regiment would have him; if not, to take King George's shilling from any corporal or sergeant who would put a bunch of ribbons in his hat. His object was to get shot; but he thought he might as well ride to death as be at the trouble of walking.

My relative's Christian name was Richard, but he was better known as Dick. He dropped his own surname on the road down, and took up that of Doubledick. He was passed as Richard Doubledick; age, twenty-two; height, five foot ten;

native place, Exmouth, which he had never been near in his life. There was no cavalry in Chatham when he limped over the bridge here with half a shoe to his dusty feet, so he enlisted into a regiment of the line, and was glad to get drunk and forget all about it.

You are to know that this relative of mine had gone wrong, and run wild. His heart was in the right place, but it was sealed up. He had been betrothed to a good and beautiful girl, whom he had loved better than she—or perhaps even he—believed; but in an evil hour he had given her cause to say to him solemnly, "Richard, I will never marry another man. I will live single for your sake, but Mary Marshall's lips"—her name was Mary Marshall—"never address another word to you on earth. Go, Richard! Heaven forgive you!" This finished him. This brought him down to Chatham. This made him Private Richard Doubledick, with a determination to be shot.

There was not a more dissipated and reckless soldier in Chatham barracks, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine, than Private Richard Doubledick. He associated with the dregs of every regiment; he was as seldom sober as he could be, and was constantly under punishment. It became clear to the whole barracks that Private Richard Doubledick would very soon be flogged.

Now, the Captain of Richard Doubledick's company was a young gentleman not above five years his senior, whose eyes had an expression in them which affected Private Richard Doubledick in a very remarkable way. They were bright, handsome, dark eyes,—what are called laughing eyes generally, and, when serious, rather steady than severe,—but they were the only eyes now left in his narrowed world that Private Richard Doubledick could not stand. Unabashed by evil report and punishment, defiant of everything else and everybody else, he had but to know that those eyes looked at him for a moment, and he felt ashamed. He could not so much as salute Captain Taunton in the street like any other officer. He was reproached and confused,—troubled by the mere possibility of the captain's looking at him. In his worst moments, he would rather turn back, and go any distance out of his way, than encounter those two handsome, dark, bright eyes.

One day, when Private Richard Doubledick came out of

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through a whole country? Turn while you may yet retrieve the past, and try."

"I will! I ask for only one witness, sir," cried Richard, with a bursting heart.

"I understand you. I will be a watchful and a faithful one."

I have heard from Private Richard Doubledick's own lips, that he dropped down upon his knee, kissed that officer's hand, arose, and went out of the light of the dark, bright eyes, an altered man.

In that year, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine, the French were in Egypt, in Italy, in Germany, where not? Napoleon Bonaparte had likewise begun to stir against us in India, and most men could read the signs of the great troubles that were coming on. In the very next year, when we formed an alliance with Austria against him, Captain Taunton's regiment was on service in India. And there was not a finer non-commissioned officer in it — no, nor in the whole line — than Corporal Richard Doubledick.

In eighteen hundred and one, the Indian army were on the coast of Egypt. Next year was the year of the proclamation of the short peace, and they were recalled. It had then become well known to thousands of men, that wherever Captain Taunton, with the dark, bright eyes, led, there, close to him, ever at his side, firm as a rock, true as the sun, and brave as Mars, would be certain to be found, while life beat in their hearts, that famous soldier, Sergeant Richard Doubledick.

Eighteen hundred and five, besides being the great year of Trafalgar, was a year of hard fighting in India. That year saw such wonders done by a sergeant-major, who cut his way single-handed through a solid mass of men, recovered the colours of his regiment, which had been seized from the hand of a poor boy shot through the heart, and rescued his wounded captain, who was down, and in a very jungle of horses' hoofs and sabres, — saw such wonders done, I say, by this brave sergeant-major, that he was specially made the bearer of the colours he had won; and Ensign Richard Doubledick had risen from the ranks.

Sorely cut up in every battle, but always reinforced by the bravest of men, — for the fame of following the old colours, shot through and through, which Ensign Richard Doubledick

had [illegible] conquered all breasts,—this regiment fought its way through the Peninsular war, up to the investment of Badajos in eighteen hundred and twelve. Again and again it had been cheered through the British ranks until the tears had sprung into men's eyes at the mere hearing of the mighty British voice so exultant in their valour; and there was not a drummer-boy but knew the legend, that wherever the two friends, Major Taunton, with the dark, bright eyes, and Ensign Richard Doubledick, who was devoted to him, were seen to go, there the boldest spirits in the English army became wild to follow.

One day, at Badajos,—not in the great storming, but in repelling a hot sally of the besieged upon our men at work in the trenches, who had given way,—the two officers found themselves hurrying forward, face to face, against a party of French infantry, who made a stand. There was an officer at their head, encouraging his men,—a courageous, handsome, gallant officer of five-and-thirty,—whom Doubledick saw hurriedly, almost momentarily, but saw well. He particularly noticed this officer waving his sword, and rallying his men with an eager and excited cry, when they fired in obedience to his gesture, and Major Taunton dropped.

[illegible]

over on the supporting arm as if for rest, died, with his
pon the breast in which he had revived a soul.
lry eye looked on Ensign Richard Doubledick that mel-
day. He buried his friend on the field, and became
bereaved man. Beyond his duty he appeared to have
remaining cares in life, — one, to preserve the little
of hair he was to give to Taunton's mother; the other,
unter that French officer who had rallied the men under
ire Taunton fell. A new legend now began to circulate
our troops; and it was, that when he and the French
ame face to face once more there would be weeping in

war went on — and through it went the exact picture of
nch officer on the one side, and the bodily reality upon
er — until the battle of Toulouse was fought. In the
sent home appeared these words: "Severely wounded,
dangerously, Lieutenant Richard Doubledick."
nidsummer-time, in the year eighteen hundred and four-
ieutenant Richard Doubledick, now a browned soldier,
nd-thirty years of age, came home to England invalided.
ught the hair with him, near his heart. Many a French
had he seen since that day; many a dreadful night, in
ng with men and lanterns for his wounded, had he re-
French officers lying disabled; but the mental picture
e reality had never come together.
ugh he was weak and suffered pain, he lost not an hour
ing down to Frome in Somersetshire, where Taunton's
lived. In the sweet, compassionate words that natu-
resent themselves to the mind to-night, "He was the
n of his mother, and she was a widow."
as a Sunday evening, and the lady sat at her quiet gar-
ndow, reading the Bible; reading to herself, in a trem-
oice, that very passage in it, as I have heard him tell.
ard the words, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!"
had to pass the window; and the bright, dark eyes of
ased time seemed to look at him. Her heart told her
e was: she came to the door quickly, and fell upon his

e saved me from ruin, made me a human creature, won
m infamy and shame. Oh, God for ever bless him! As
ll, He will!"

"He will!" the lady answered. "I know he will, by Heaven!" Then she piteously cried, "But, oh, my dear boy, my darling boy!"

Never from the hour when Private Richard Doubledick enlisted at Chatham had the Private, Corporal, Sergeant, Sergeant Major, Ensign, or Lieutenant breathed his right name, or the name of Mary Marshall, or a word of the story of his life, into any ear except his reclaimer's. That previous scene in his existence was closed. He had firmly resolved that his expiation should be to live unknown; to disturb no more the peace that had long grown over his old offences; to let it be revealed, when he was dead, that he had striven and suffered, and had never forgotten; and then, if they could forgive him and believe him — well, it would be time enough — time enough!

But that night, remembering the words he had cherished for two years, "Tell her how we became friends. It will comfort her, as it comforts me," he related everything. It gradually seemed to him as if in his maturity he had recovered a mother; it gradually seemed to her as if in her bereavement she had found a son. During his stay in England, the quiet garden into which he had slowly and painfully crept, a stranger, became the boundary of his home; when he was able to rejoin his regiment in the spring, he left the garden, thinking was this indeed the first time he had ever turned his face towards the old colours with a woman's blessing!

He followed them — so ragged, so scarred and pierced now, that they would scarcely hold together — to Quatre Bras and Ligny. He stood beside them, in an awful stillness of many men, shadowy through the mist and drizzle of a wet June forenoon, on the field of Waterloo. And down to that hour the picture in his mind of the French officer had never been compared with the reality.

The famous regiment was in action early in the battle, and received its first check in many an eventful year, when he was seen to fall. But it swept on to avenge him, and left behind it no such creature in the world of consciousness as Lieutenant Richard Doubledick.

Through pits of mire, and pools of rain; along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy waggons, tramp of men and horses, and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers

Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was
l to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in
; and there it lay, week after week, through the long
summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had
and was gathered in.

and over again the sun rose and set upon the crowded
'er and over again the moonlight nights were quiet on
ıs of Waterloo; and all that time was a blank to what
'n Lieutenant Richard Doubledick. Rejoicing troops
into Brussels, and marched out; brothers and fathers,
nothers, and wives came thronging thither, drew their
joy or agony, and departed; so many times a day the
ıg; so many times the shadows of the great buildings
; so many lights sprang up at dusk; so many feet
ıere and there upon the pavements; so many hours of
d cooler air of night succeeded, — indifferent to all, a
'ace lay on a bed, like the face of a recumbent statue on
ɔ of Lieutenant Richard Doubledick.

y labouring, at last, through a long heavy dream of confu-
ne and place, presenting faint glimpses of army surgeons
ıe knew, and of faces that had been familiar to his
-dearest and kindest among them, Mary Marshall's,
solicitude upon it more like reality than anything he
iscern. — Lieutenant Richard Doubledick came back to
o the beautiful life of a calm autumn evening sunset,
peaceful life of a fresh quiet room with a large window

"I came to nurse you. We have nursed you many weeks. You were moved here long ago. Do you remember nothing?"

"Nothing."

The lady kissed his cheek, and held his hand, soothing him.

"Where is the regiment? What has happened? Let me call you mother. What has happened, mother?"

"A great victory, dear. The war is over, and the regiment was the bravest in the field."

His eyes kindled, his lips trembled, he sobbed, and the tears ran down his face. He was very weak, too weak to move his hand.

"Was it dark just now?" he asked presently.

"No."

"It was only dark to me? Something passed away, like a black shadow. But as it went, and the sun [illegible] how beautiful it is [illegible] my face, I thought I saw a light white cloud pass out at the door. Was there nothing that went out?"

[illegible]

[illegible] "Mary," and she held him [illegible]

"I am not breaking a rash vow, Richard. These are not Mary Marshall's lips that speak. I have another name."

She was married.

"I have another name, Richard. Did you ever hear it?"

"Never!"

He looked into her face, so pensively beautiful, and wondered at the smile upon it through her tears.

"Think again, Richard. Are you sure you never heard my altered name?"

"Never!"

"Don't move your head to look at me, dear Richard. Let it lie here while I tell my story. I loved a generous, noble man; loved him with my whole heart; loved him for years and years; loved him faithfully, devotedly; loved him with no hope of return; loved him, knowing nothing of his highest qualities — not even knowing that he was alive. He was a brave soldier. He was honoured and beloved by thousands of thousands, when the mother of his dear friend found me, and showed me that in all his triumphs he had never forgotten me. He was wounded in a great battle. He was brought, dying, here, into Brussels. I came to watch and tend him, as I would have joyfully gone, with such a purpose, to the dreariest ends of the earth. When he knew no one else, he knew me. When he suffered most, he bore his sufferings barely murmuring, content to rest his head where yours rests now. When he lay at the point of death, he married me, that he might call me Wife before he died. And the name, my dear love, that I took on that forgotten night —"

"I know it now!" he sobbed. "The shadowy remembrance strengthens. It is come back. I thank Heaven that my mind is quite restored! My Mary, kiss me; lull this weary head to rest, or I shall die of gratitude. His parting words are fulfilled. I see Home again!"

Well! They were happy. It was a long recovery, but they were happy through it all. The snow had melted on the ground, and the birds were singing in the leafless thickets of the early spring, when those three were first able to ride out together, and when people flocked about the open carriage to cheer and congratulate Captain Richard Doubledick.

But even then it became necessary for the Captain, instead of returning to England, to complete his recovery in the climate of Southern France. They found a spot upon the Rhone, within

a ride of the old town of Avignon, and within view of its broken bridge, which was all they could desire; they lived there, together, six months; then returned to England. Mrs. Taunton, growing old after three years,—though not so old as that her bright, dark eyes were dimmed,—and remembering that her strength had been benefited by the change, resolved to go back for a year to those parts. So she went with a faithful servant, who had often carried her son in his arms; and she was to be rejoined and escorted home, at the year's end, by Captain Richard Doubledick.

She wrote regularly to her children (as she called them now), and they to her. She went to the neighbourhood of Aix; and there, in their own château near the farmer's house she rented, she grew into intimacy with a family belonging to that part of France. The intimacy began in her often meeting among the vineyards a pretty child, a girl with a most compassionate heart, who was never tired of listening to the solitary English lady's stories of her poor son and the cruel wars. The family were as gentle as the child, and at length she came to know them so well that she accepted their invitation to pass the last month of her residence abroad under their roof. All this intelligence she wrote home, piecemeal as it came about, from time to time; and at last enclosed a polite note from the head of the house, soliciting, on the occasion of his approaching mission to that neighbourhood, the honour of the company of cet homme si justement célèbre, Monsieur le Capitaine Richard Doubledick.

Captain Doubledick, now a hardy, handsome man in the full vigour of life, broader across the chest and shoulders than he had ever been before, dispatched a courteous reply, and followed it in person. Travelling through all that extent of country after three years of Peace, he blessed the better days on which the world had fallen. The corn was golden, not drenched in unnatural red; was bound in sheaves for food, not trodden underfoot by men in mortal fight. The smoke rose up from peaceful hearths, not blazing ruins. The carts were laden with the fair fruits of the earth, not with wounds and death. To him who had so often seen the terrible reverse, these things were beautiful indeed, and they brought him in a softened spirit to the old château near Aix upon a deep blue evening.

It was a large château of the genuine old ghostly kind, with round towers and extinguishers, and a high leaden roof

more windows than Aladdin's Palace. The lattice blinds were all thrown open, after the heat of the day, and there were glimpses of rambling walls and corridors within. Then there were immense out-buildings fallen into partial decay, masses of dark trees, terrace-gardens, balustrades; tanks of water, too weak to play and too dirty to work; statues, weeds, and thickets of iron railing that seemed to have overgrown themselves like the shrubberies, and to have branched out in all manner of wild shapes. The entrance doors stood open, as doors often do in that country when the heat of the day is past; and the captain saw no bell or knocker, and walked in.

He walked into a lofty stone hall, refreshingly cool and gloomy after the glare of a southern day's travel. Extending along the four sides of this hall was a gallery, leading to suites of rooms; and it was lighted from the top. Still no bell was to be seen.

"Faith," said the captain, halting, ashamed of the clanking of his boots, "this is a ghostly beginning!"

He started back, and felt his face turn white. In the gallery, looking down at him, stood the French officer — the officer whose picture he had carried in his mind so long and so far. Compared with the original, at last — in every lineament how like it was!

He moved, and disappeared, and Captain Richard Doubledick heard his steps coming quickly down into the hall. He entered through an archway. There was a bright, sudden look upon his face, much such a look as it had worn in that fatal moment.

Monsieur le Capitaine Richard Doubledick? Enchanted to receive him! A thousand apologies! The servants were all out in the air. There was a little fête among them in the garden. In effect, it was the fête day of my daughter, the little cherished and protected of Madame Taunton.

He was so gracious and so frank that Monsieur le Capitaine Richard Doubledick could not withhold his hand. "It is the hand of a brave Englishman," said the French officer, retaining it while he spoke. "I could respect a brave Englishman, even as my foe, how much more as my friend! I also am a soldier."

"He has not remembered me as I have remembered him; he did not take such note of my face, that day, as I took of his,"

thought Captain Richard Doubledick. "How shall I tell him?"

The French officer conducted his guest into a garden, and presented him to his wife, an engaging and beautiful woman, sitting with Mrs. Taunton in a whimsical, old-fashioned pavilion. His daughter, her fair young face beaming with joy, came running to embrace him; and there was a boy baby tumbling down among the orange-trees on the broad steps, in making for his father's legs. A multitude of children visitors were dancing to sprightly music; and all the servants and peasants about the château were dancing, too. It was a scene of innocent happiness that might have been invented for the climax of the scenes of peace which had soothed the captain's journey.

He looked on, greatly troubled in his mind, until a resounding bell rang, and the French officer begged to show him his rooms. They went up-stairs into the gallery from which the officer had looked down; and Monsieur le Capitaine Richard Doubledick was cordially welcomed to a grand outer chamber, and a smaller one within it, all clocks, and draperies, and hearths, and brazen dogs, and tiles, and cool devices, and elegance, and vastness.

"You were at Waterloo," said the French officer.

"I was," said Captain Richard Doubledick. "And at Badajos."

Left alone with the sound of his own stern voice in his ears, he sat down to consider, What shall I do, and how shall I tell him? At that time, unhappily, many deplorable duels had been fought between English and French officers, arising out of the recent war; and these duels, and how to avoid this officer's hospitality, were the uppermost thought in Captain Richard Doubledick's mind.

He was thinking, and letting the time run out in which he should have dressed for dinner, when Mrs. Taunton spoke to him outside the door, asking if he could give her the letter he had brought from Mary. "His mother, above all," the captain thought. "How shall I tell her?"

"You will form a friendship with your host, I hope," said Mrs. Taunton, whom he hurriedly admitted, "that will last for life. He is so true-hearted and so generous, Richard, that you can hardly fail to esteem each other. If he had been spared," she kissed (not without tears) the locket in which she wore his

sir, "he would have appreciated him with his own magnanimity, and would have been truly happy that the evil days were past which made such a man his enemy."

She left the room; and the captain walked, first to one window, whence he could see the dancing in the garden, then to another window, whence he could see the smiling prospect and the peaceful vineyards.

"Spirit of my departed friend," said he, "is it through thee these better thoughts are rising in my mind? Is it thou who hast shown me, all the way I have been drawn to meet this man, the blessings of the altered time? Is it thou who hast sent thy stricken mother to me, to stay my angry hand? Is it from thee the whisper comes that this man did his duty as thou didst, — and as I did, through thy guidance, which has wholly saved me here on earth, — and that he did no more?"

He sat down with his head buried in his hands, and, when he rose up, made the second strong resolution of his life, — that neither to the French officer, nor to the mother of his departed friend, nor to any soul, while either of the two was living, would he breathe what only he knew. And when he touched that French officer's glass with his own, that day at dinner, he secretly forgave him in the name of the Divine Forgiver of injuries.

Here I ended my story as the first Poor Traveller. But, if I had told it now, I could have added that the time has since come when the son of Major Richard Doubledick, and the son of that French officer, friends as their fathers were before them, fought side by side in one cause, with their respective nations, like long-divided brothers whom the better times have brought together, fast united.

CHAPTER III

THE ROAD

My story being finished, and the Wassail, too, we broke up as the Cathedral bell struck Twelve. I did not take leave of my travellers that night; for it had come into my head to

reappear, in conjunction with some hot coffee, at seven in the morning.

As I passed along the High-street, I heard the Waits at a distance, and struck off to find them. They were playing near one of the old gates of the city, at the corner of a wonderfully quaint row of red-brick tenements, which the clarionet obligingly informed me were inhabited by the Minor Canons. They had odd little porches over the doors, like sounding-boards over old pulpits; and I thought I should like to see one of the Minor Canons come out upon his top step, and favour us with a little Christmas discourse about the poor scholars of Rochester, taking for his text the words of his Master, relative to the devouring of Widows' houses.

The clarionet was so communicative, and my inclinations were (as they generally are) of so vagabond a tendency, that I accompanied the Waits across an open green called the Vines, and assisted—in the French sense—at the performance of two waltzes, two polkas, and three Irish melodies, before I thought of my inn any more. However, I returned to it then, and found a fiddle in the kitchen, and Ben, the wall-eyed young man, and two chambermaids circling round the great deal table with the utmost animation.

I had a very bad night. It cannot have been owing to the turkey or the beef,—and the Wassail is out of the question—but in every endeavour that I made to get to sleep, I failed most dismally. I was never asleep; and in whatsoever direction my mind wandered, the effigy of Master Richard Watts perpetually embarrassed it.

In a word, I only got out of the Worshipful Master Richard Watts's way by getting out of bed in the dark at six o'clock, and tumbling, as my custom is, into all the cold water that could be accumulated for the purpose. The outer air was dull and cold enough in the street, when I came down there; and the one candle in our supper-room at Watts's Charity looked as pale in the burning as if it had had a bad night too. But my Travellers had all slept soundly, and they took to the hot coffee, and the piles of bread-and-butter, which Ben had arranged like deals in a timber-yard, as kindly as I could desire.

While it was yet scarcely daylight, we all came out into the street together, and there shook hands. The widow took the

ttle sailor towards Chatham, where he was to find a steamboat or Sheerness; the lawyer, with an extremely knowing look, ent his own way, without committing himself by announcing is intentions; two more struck off by the Cathedral and old astle for Maidstone; and the book-pedler accompanied me over he bridge. As for me, I was going to walk by Cobham Woods, s far upon my way to London as I fancied.

When I came to the stile and footpath by which I was to liverge from the main road, I bade farewell to my last remaining Poor Traveller, and pursued my way alone. And now the mists began to rise in the most beautiful manner, and the sun to shine; and as I went on through the bracing air, seeing the hoar frost sparkle everywhere, I felt as if all Nature shared in the joy of the great Birthday.

Going through the woods, the softness of my tread upon the mossy ground and among the brown leaves enhanced the Christmas sacredness by which I felt surrounded. As the whitened stems environed me, I thought how the Founder of the time had never raised his benignant hand, save to bless and heal, except in the case of one unconscious tree. By Cobham Hall, I came to the village, and the churchyard where the dead had been quietly buried, "in the sure and certain hope" which Christmas time inspired. What children could I see at play, and not be loving of, recalling who had loved them? No garden that I passed was out of unison with the day, for I remembered that the tomb was in a garden, and that "she, supposing him to be the gardener," had said, "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." In time, the distant river with the ships came full in view, and with it pictures of the poor fishermen, mending their nets, who arose and followed him, — of the teaching of the people from a ship pushed off a little way from shore, by reason of the multitude, — of a majestic figure walking on the water, in the loneliness of night. My very shadow on the ground was eloquent of Christmas; for did not the people lay their sick where the mere shadows of the men who had heard and seen him might fall as they passed along?

Thus Christmas begirt me far and near, until I had come to Blackheath, and had walked down the long vista of gnarled old trees in Greenwich Park, and was being steam-rattled through the mists now closing in once more, towards the lights of Lon-

don. Brightly they shone, but not so brightly as my ow
and the brighter faces around it, when we came togel
celebrate the day. And there I told of worthy Master R
Watts, and of my supper with the Six Poor Travelle
were neither Rogues nor Proctors, and from that hour to
have never seen one of them again.

THE HOLLY-TREE

THREE BRANCHES

FIRST BRANCH

MYSELF

I HAVE kept one secret in the course of my life. I am a bashful man. Nobody would suppose it, nobody ever does suppose it, nobody ever did suppose it, but I am naturally a bashful man. This is the secret which I have never breathed until now.

I might greatly move the reader by some account of the innumerable places I have not been to, the innumerable people I have not called upon or received, the innumerable social evasions I have been guilty of, solely because I am by original constitution and character a bashful man. But I will leave the reader unmoved, and proceed with the object before me.

That object is to give a plain account of my travels and discoveries in the Holly-Tree Inn; in which place of good entertainment for man and beast I was once snowed up.

It happened in the memorable year when I parted for ever from Angela Leath, whom I was shortly to have married, on making the discovery that she preferred my bosom friend. From our school-days I had freely admitted Edwin, in my own mind, to be far superior to myself; and though I was grievously wounded at heart, I felt the preference to be natural, and tried to forgive them both. It was under these circumstances that I resolved to go to America — on my way to the Devil.

Communicating my discovery neither to Angela nor to Edwin, but resolving to write each of them an affecting letter conveying my blessing and forgiveness, which the steam-tender for shore should carry to the post when I myself should be bound for the New World, far beyond recall, — I say, locking up my grief in my own breast, and consoling myself as I could with the pros-

times. I was always bewildered as to time and place, and always more or less out of my senses. The coach and horses seemed to execute in chorus Auld Lang Syne, without a moment's intermission. They kept the time and tune with the greatest regularity, and rose into the swell at the beginning of the refrain with a precision that worried me to death. While we changed horses, the guard and coachman went stamping up and down the road, printing off their shoes in the snow, and poured so much liquid consolation into themselves without being any the worse for it, that I began to confound them, as it darkened again, with two great white casks standing on end. Our horses tumbled down in solitary places, and we got them up, — which was the pleasantest variety *I* had, for it warmed me. And it snowed and snowed, and still it snowed, and never left off snowing. All night long we went on in this manner. Thus we came round the clock, upon the Great North Road, to the performance of Auld Lang Syne by day again. And it snowed and snowed, and still it snowed, and never left off snowing.

I forget now where we were at noon on the second day, and where we ought to have been; but I know that we were scores of miles behindhand, and that our case was growing worse every hour. The drift was becoming prodigiously deep; land-marks were getting snowed out; the road and the fields were all one; instead of having fences and hedge-rows to guide us, we went crunching on over an unbroken surface of ghastly white that might sink beneath us at any moment, and drop us down a whole hillside. Still the coachman and guard — who kept together on the box, always in council, and looking well about them — made out the track with astonishing sagacity.

When we came in sight of a town, it looked, to my fancy, like a large drawing on a slate, with abundance of slate-pencil expended on the churches and houses where the snow lay thickest. When we came within a town, and found the church clocks all stopped, the dial-faces choked with snow, and the inn signs blotted out, it seemed as if the whole place were overgrown with white moss. As to the coach, it was a mere snowball; similarly the men and boys who ran along beside us to the town's end, turning our clogged wheels and encouraging our horses, were men and boys of snow; and the bleak wild solitude to which they at last dismissed us was a snowy Sahara

One would have thought this enough; notwithstanding which, I pledge my word that it snowed and snowed, and still it snowed, and never left off snowing.

We performed Auld Lang Syne the whole day; seeing nothing, out of towns and villages, but the track of stoats, hares, and foxes, and sometimes of birds. At nine o'clock at night, on a Yorkshire moor, a cheerful burst from our horn, and a welcome sound of talking, with a glimmering and moving about of lanterns, roused me from my drowsy state. I found that we were going to change.

They helped me out, and I said to a waiter, whose bare head became as white as King Lear's in a single minute, "What Inn is this?"

"The Holly-Tree, sir," said he.

"Upon my word, I believe," said I, apologetically, to the guard and coachman, "that I must stop here."

Now the landlord, and the landlady, and the hostler, and the postboy, and all the stable authorities, had already asked the coachman, to the wide-eyed interest of all the rest of the establishment, if he meant to go on. The coachman had already replied, "Yes, he 'd take her through it," — meaning by Her the coach, — "if so be as George would stand by him." George was the guard, and he had already sworn that he *would* stand by him. So the helpers were already getting the horses out.

My declaring myself beaten, after this parley, was not an announcement without preparation. Indeed, but for the way to the announcement being smoothed by the parley, I more than doubt whether, as an innately bashful man, I should have had the confidence to make it. As it was, it received the approval even of the guard and coachman. Therefore, with many confirmations of my inclining, and many remarks from one bystander to another that the gentleman could go for'ard by the mail to-morrow, whereas to-night he would only be froze, and where was the good of a gentleman being froze, — ah, let alone buried alive (which latter clause was added by a humorous helper as a joke at my expense, and was extremely well received), I saw my portmanteau got out stiff, like a frozen body; did the handsome thing by the guard and coachman; wished them good night and a prosperous journey; and a little ashamed of myself, after all, for leaving them to fight it out alone, followed the landlord, landlady, and waiter of the Holly-Tree up stairs.

I thought I had never seen such a large room as that into which they showed me. It had five windows, with dark red curtains that would have absorbed the light of a general illumination; and there were complications of drapery at the top of the curtains that went wandering about the wall in a most extraordinary manner. I asked for a smaller room, and they told me there was no smaller room. They could screen me in, however, the landlord said. They brought a great old japanned screen, with natives (Japanese, I suppose) engaged in a variety of idiotic pursuits all over it; and left me roasting whole before an immense fire.

My bedroom was some quarter of a mile off, up a great staircase, at the end of a long gallery; and nobody knows what a misery this is to a bashful man who would rather not meet people on the stairs. It was the grimmest room I have ever had the nightmare in; and all the furniture, from the four posts of the bed to the two old silver candlesticks, was tall, high-shouldered, and spindle-waisted. Below, in my sitting-room, if I looked round my screen, the wind rushed at me like a mad bull; if I stuck to my arm-chair, the fire scorched me to the colour of a new brick. The chimney-piece was very high, and there was a bad glass — what I may call a wavy glass — above it, which, when I stood up, just showed me my anterior phrenological developments, — and these never look well, in any subject, cut short off at the eyebrow. If I stood with my back to the fire, a gloomy vault of darkness above and beyond the screen insisted on being looked at; and in its dim remoteness, the drapery of the ten curtains of the five windows went twisting and creeping about, like a nest of gigantic worms.

I suppose that what I observe in myself must be observed by some other men of similar character in *themselves;* therefore I am emboldened to mention that, when I travel, I never arrive at a place but I immediately want to go away from it. Before I had finished my supper of broiled fowl and mulled port, I had impressed upon the waiter in detail my arrangements for departure in the morning. Breakfast and bill at eight. Fly at nine. Two horses, or, if needful, even four.

Tired though I was, the night appeared about a week long. In cases of nightmare, I thought of Angela, and felt more depressed than ever by the reflection that I was on the shortest road to Gretna Green. What had *I* to do with Gretna Green?

I was not going *that* way to the Devil, but by the American route, I remarked, in my bitterness.

In the morning I found that it was snowing still, that it had snowed all night, and that I was snowed up. Nothing could get out of that spot on the moor, or could come at it, until the road had been cut out by labourers from the market-town. When they might cut their way to the Holly-Tree, nobody could tell me.

It was now Christmas Eve. I should have had a dismal Christmas time of it anywhere, and consequently that did not so much matter; still, being snowed up was like dying of frost, thing I had not bargained for. I felt very lonely. Yet I ould no more have proposed to the landlord and landlady to dmit me to their society (though I should have liked it very uch) than I could have asked them to present me with a iece of plate. Here my great secret, the real bashfulness of y character, is to be observed. Like most bashful men, I dge of other people as if they were bashful, too. Besides eing far too shamefaced to make the proposal myself, I really ad a delicate misgiving that it would be in the last degree isconcerting to them.

Trying to settle down, therefore, in my solitude, I first of all ked what books there were in the house. The waiter brought e a "Book of Roads," two or three old Newspapers, a little ong Book, terminating in a collection of Toasts and Senti-ents, a little Jest Book, an odd volume of "Peregrine Pickle," d the "Sentimental Journey." I knew every word of the ro last already, but I read them through again, then tried to m all the songs (Auld Lang Syne was among them); went tirely through the jokes,—in which I found a fund of melan-oly adapted to my state of mind; proposed all the toasts, unciated all the sentiments, and mastered the papers. The tter had nothing in them but stock advertisements, a meeting out a county rate, and a highway robbery. As I am a greedy ader, I could not make this supply hold out until night; it as exhausted by tea-time. Being then entirely cast upon my n resources, I got through an hour in considering what to do xt. Ultimately, it came into my head (from which I was xious by any means to exclude Angela and Edwin), that I ould endeavour to recall my experience of Inns, and would y how long it lasted me. I stirred the fire, moved my chair

a little to one side of the screen, — not daring to go far, for I knew the wind was waiting to make a rush at me, I could hear it growling, — and began.

My first impressions of an Inn dated from the Nursery; consequently I went back to the Nursery for a starting point, and found myself at the knee of a sallow woman with a fishy eye, an aquiline nose, and a green gown, whose specialty was a dismal narrative of a landlord by the roadside, whose visitors unaccountably disappeared for many years, until it was discovered that the pursuit of his life had been to convert them into pies. For the better devotion of himself to this branch of industry, he had constructed a secret door behind the head of the bed; and when the visitor (oppressed with pie) had fallen asleep, this wicked landlord would look softly in with a lamp in one hand and a knife in the other, would cut his throat, and would make him into pies; for which purpose he had coppers, underneath a trap-door, always boiling, and rolled out his pastry in the dead of the night. Yet even he was not insensible to the stings of conscience, for he never went to sleep without being heard to mutter, "Too much pepper!" which was eventually the cause of his being brought to justice. I had no sooner disposed of this criminal than there started up another of the same period, whose profession was originally housebreaking; in the pursuit of which art he had had his right ear chopped off one night, as he was burglariously getting in at a window, by a brave and lovely servant-maid (whom the aquiline-nosed woman, though not at all answering the description, always mysteriously implied to be herself). After several years, this brave and lovely servant-maid was married to the landlord of a country Inn; which landlord had this remarkable characteristic, that he always wore a silk nightcap, and never would on any consideration take it off. At last, one night, when he was fast asleep, the brave and lovely woman lifted up his silk nightcap on the right side, and found that he had no ear there; upon which she sagaciously perceived that he was the clipped housebreaker, who had married her with the intention of putting her into pies. She [illegible] This same narrator, who had a ghastly pleasure, I have long been persuaded, in

ıg me to the utmost confines of my reason, had another ic anecdote within her own experience, founded, I now upon "Raymond and Agnes, or the Bleeding Nun." l it happened to her brother-in-law, who was immensely which my father was not; and immensely tall, — which er was not. It was always a point with this Ghoul to my dearest relations and friends to my youthful mind ircumstances of disparaging contrast. The brother-in- riding once through a forest on a magnificent horse l no magnificent horse at our house), attended by a and valuable Newfoundland dog (we had no dog), found himself benighted, and came to an Inn. A man opened the door, and he asked her if he could ed there. She answered yes, and put his horse in the nd took him into a room where there were two dark While he was at supper, a parrot in the room began to ing, "Blood, blood! Wipe up the blood!" Upon ne of the dark men wrung the parrot's neck, and said he l of roasted parrots, and he meant to have this one for t in the morning. After eating and drinking heartily, ensely rich, tall brother-in-law went up to bed; but he er vexed, because they had shut his dog in the stable, hat they never allowed dogs in the house. He sat very r more than an hour, thinking and thinking, when, just andle was burning out, he heard a scratch at the door. ned the door, and there was the Newfoundland dog! came softly in, smelt about him, went straight to some the corner which the dark men had said covered apples, straw away, and disclosed two sheets steeped in blood. that moment the candle went out, and the brother-in- king through a chink in the door, saw the two dark men up stairs; one armed with a dagger that long (about); the other carrying a chopper, a sack, and a spade. no remembrance of the close of this adventure, I sup- faculties to have been always so frozen with terror at ge of it that the power of listening stagnated within me quarter of an hour.

barbarous stories carried me, sitting there on the Holly- arth, to the Roadside Inn, renowned in my time in a y book with a folding plate, representing in a central ment of oval form the portrait of Jonathan Bradford,

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and in four corner compartments four incidents of the tragedy with which the name is associated, — coloured with a hand at once so free and economical that the bloom of Jonathan's complexion passed without any pause into the breeches of the hostler, and, smearing itself off into the next division, became rum in a bottle. Then I remembered how the landlord was found at the murdered traveller's bedside, with his own knife at his feet, and blood upon his hand; how he was hanged for the murder, notwithstanding his protestation that he had indeed come there to kill the traveller for his saddle-bags, but had been stricken motionless on finding him already slain; and how the hostler, years afterwards, owned the deed. By this time I had made myself quite uncomfortable. I stirred the fire, and stood with my back to it as long as I could bear the heat, looking straight at the darkness beyond the screen, and at the wormy curtains creeping in and creeping out, like the worms in the ballad of Alonzo the Brave and the Fair Imogene.

There was an Inn in the cathedral town where I went to school, which had pleasanter recollections about it than any of these. I took it next. It was the Inn where friends used to put up, and where we used to go to see parents, and to have salmon and fowls, and be tipped. It had an ecclesiastical sign, — the Mitre, — and a bar that seemed to be the next best thing to a bishopric, it was so snug. I loved the landlord's youngest daughter to distraction, — but let that pass. It was in this Inn that I was cried over by my rosy little sister, because I had acquired a black eye in a fight. And though she had been, that Holly-Tree night, for many a long year where all tears are dried, the Mitre softened me yet.

"To be continued to-morrow," said I, when I took my candle to go to bed. But my bed took it upon itself to continue the train of thought that night. It carried me away, like the enchanted carpet, to a distant place (though still in England), and there, alighting from a stage-coach at another Inn in the snow, as I had actually done some years before, I repeated in my sleep a curious experience I had really had there. More than a year before I made the journey in the course of which I put up at that Inn, I had lost a very near and dear friend by death. Every night since, at home or away from home, I had dreamed of that friend; sometimes as still living; sometimes as returning from the world of shadows to co

t; always as being beautiful, placid, and happy, never in
ociation with any approach to fear or distress. It was at a
ely Inn in a wide moorland place that I halted to pass the
ht. When I had looked from my bedroom window over the
te of snow on which the moon was shining, I sat down by
fire to write a letter. I had always, until that hour, kept
ithin my own breast that I dreamed every night of the dear
one. But in the letter that I wrote I recorded the circum-
ce, and added that I felt much interested in proving whether
subject of my dream would still be faithful to me, travel-
l, and in that remote place. No. I lost the beloved figure
ny vision in parting with the secret. My sleep has never
ed upon it since, in sixteen years, but once. I was in Italy,
awoke (or seemed to awake), the well-remembered voice
nctly in my ears, conversing with it. I entreated it, as it
above my bed and soared up to the vaulted roof of the old
a, to answer me a question I had asked touching the Future
. My hands were still outstretched towards it as it van-
l, when I heard a bell ringing by the garden wall, and a
e in the deep stillness of the night calling on all good
stians to pray for the souls of the dead, it being All Souls'

o return to the Holly-Tree. When I awoke next day, it
freezing hard, and the lowering sky threatened more snow.
breakfast cleared away, I drew my chair into its former place,
with the fire getting so much the better of the landscape
I sat in twilight, resumed my Inn remembrances.

hat was a good Inn down in Wiltshire where I put up once,
ie days of the hard Wiltshire ale, and before all beer was
rness. It was on the skirts of Salisbury Plain, and the
night wind that rattled my lattice window came moaning
e from Stonehenge. There was a hanger-on at that estab-
nent (a supernaturally preserved Druid I believe him to
been, and to be still), with long white hair, and a flinty
eye always looking afar off; who claimed to have been a
herd, and who seemed to be ever watching for the reappear-
, on the verge of the horizon, of some ghostly flock of sheep
had been mutton for many ages. He was a man with a
l belief in him that no one could count the stones of Stone-
e twice, and make the same number of them; likewise, that
one who counted them three times nine times, and then stood

in the centre and said, "I dare!" would behold a tremendous apparition, and be stricken dead. He pretended to have seen a bustard (I suspect him to have been familiar with the dodo), in manner following: He was out upon the plain at the close of a late autumn day, when he dimly discerned, going on before him at a curious fitfully bounding pace, what he at first supposed to be a gig-umbrella that had been blown from some conveyance, but what he presently believed to be a lean dwarf man upon a little pony. Having followed this object for some distance without gaining on it, and having called to it many times without receiving any answer, he pursued it for miles and miles, when, at length coming up with it, he discovered it to be the last bustard in Great Britain, degenerated into a wingless state, and running along the ground. Resolved to capture him or perish in the attempt, he closed with the bustard; but the bustard, who had formed a counter-resolution that he should do neither, threw him, stunned him, and was last seen making off due west. This weird man, at that stage of metempsychosis, may have been a sleep-walker or an enthusiast or a robber; but I awoke one night to find him in the dark at my bedside, repeating the Athanasian Creed in a terrific voice. I paid my bill next day, and retired from the country with all possible precipitation.

That was not a commonplace story that worked itself out at a little Inn in Switzerland, while I was staying there. It was a very homely place, in a village of one narrow, zigzag street, among mountains, and you went in at the main door through the cow-house, and among the mules and the dogs and the fowls, before ascending a great bare staircase to the rooms; which were all of unpainted wood, without plastering or papering,—like rough packing-cases. Outside there was nothing but the straggling street, a little toy church with a copper-coloured steeple, a pine forest, a torrent, mists, and mountain-sides. A young man belonging to this Inn had disappeared eight weeks before (it was winter-time), and was supposed to have had some undiscovered love affair, and to have gone for a soldier. He had got up in the night, and dropped into the village street from the loft in which he slept with another man; and he had done it so quietly, that his companion and fellow-labourer had heard no movement when he was awakened in the morning, and they said, "Louis, where is Henri?" They looked for him high and low, in vain, and gave him up. Now, outside this Inn, there

there stood outside every dwelling in the village, a e-wood; but the stack belonging to the Inn was higher f the rest, because the Inn was the richest house, and most fuel. It began to be noticed, while they were gh and low, that a Bantam cock, part of the live stock, put himself wonderfully out of his way to get to the wood-stack; and that he would stay there for hours crowing, until he appeared in danger of splitting him- weeks went on, — six weeks, — and still this terrible eglecting his domestic affairs, was always on the top of tack, crowing the very eyes out of his head. By this s perceived that Louis had become inspired with a mosity towards the terrible Bantam, and one morning n by a woman, who sat nursing her goitre at a little a gleam of sun, to catch up a rough billet of wood, at oath, hurl it at the terrible Bantam crowing on stack, and bring him down dead. Hereupon the ith a sudden light in her mind, stole round to the e wood-stack, and, being a good climber, as all those e, climbed up, and soon was seen upon the summit, looking down the hollow within, and crying, "Seize murderer! Ring the church bell! Here is the I saw the murderer that day, and I saw him as I sat at the Holly-Tree Inn, and I see him now, lying rith cords on the stable-litter, among the mild eyes noking breath of the cows, waiting to be taken away lice, and stared at by the fearful village. A heavy the dullest animal in the stables, — with a stupid a lumpish face devoid of any trace of sensibility, who within the knowledge of the murdered youth, an of certain small moneys belonging to his master, and aken this hopeful mode of putting a possible accuser s way. All of which he confessed next day, like a tch who could n't be troubled any more, now that they old of him, and meant to make an end of him. I saw again, on the day of my departure from the Inn. In on the headsman still does his office with a sword; ie upon this murderer sitting bound to a chair, with bandaged, on a scaffold in a little market-place. In nt, a great sword (loaded with quicksilver in the thick ie blade) swept round him like a gust of wind or fire,

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and there was no such creature in the world. My wond
not that he was so suddenly dispatched, but that any h
left unreaped within a radius of fifty yards of that tren
sickle.

That was a good Inn, too, with the kind, cheerful l
and the honest landlord, where I lived in the shadow o
Blanc, and where one of the apartments has a zoological
ing on the walls, not so accurately joined but that the e
occasionally rejoices in a tiger's hind-legs and tail, while
puts on a trunk and tusks, and the bear, moulting as i
appears as to portions of himself like a leopard. I ma
eral American friends at that Inn, who all called Mon
Mount Blank, — except one good-humoured gentleman, o
sociable nature, who became on such intimate terms
that he spoke of it familiarly as "Blank;" observing, a
fast, "Blank looks pretty tall this morning;" or consi
doubting in the courtyard in the evening, whether there
some go-ahead naters in our country, sir, that would m
the top of Blank in a couple of hours from first start —

Once I passed a fortnight at an Inn in the North of E
where I was haunted by the ghost of a tremendous pie
a Yorkshire pie, like a fort — an abandoned fort with
in it; but the waiter had a fixed idea that it was a p
ceremony at every meal to put the pie on the table
some days I tried to hint, in several delicate ways, that
sidered the pie done with; as, for example, by empty
ends of glasses of wine into it; putting cheese-plates and
into it, as into a basket; putting wine-bottles into it, a
cooler; but always in vain, the pie being invariably cle
again and brought up as before. At last, beginning
doubtful whether I was not the victim of a spectral i
and whether my health and spirits might not sink u
horrors of an imaginary pie, I cut a triangle out of it,
large as the musical instrument of that name in a p
orchestra. Human prevision could not have foreseen t
— but the waiter mended the pie. With some effect
of cement, he adroitly fitted the triangle in again, and
my reckoning and fled.

The Holly-Tree was getting rather dismal. I made a
land expedition beyond the screen, and penetrated as fa
fourth window. Here I was driven back by stress of w

Arrived at my winter quarters once more, I made up the fire, and took another Inn.

It was in the remotest part of Cornwall. A great annual Miners' Feast was being holden at the Inn, when I and my travelling companions presented ourselves at night among the wild crowd that were dancing before it by torch-light. We had had a break-down in the dark, on a stony morass some miles away; and I had the honour of leading one of the unharnessed post-horses. If any lady or gentleman, on perusal of the present lines, will take any very tall post-horse with his traces hanging about his legs, and will conduct him by the bearing-rein into the heart of a country dance of a hundred and fifty couples, that lady or gentleman will, then, and only then, form an adequate idea of the extent to which that post-horse will tread on his conductor's toes. Over and above which, the post-horse, finding three hundred people whirling about him, will probably rear, and also lash out with his hind-legs, in a manner incompatible with dignity or self-respect on his conductor's part. With such little drawbacks on my usually impressive aspect, I appeared at this Cornish Inn, to the unutterable wonder of the Cornish Miners. It was full, and twenty times full, and nobody could be received but the post-horse, — though to get rid of that noble animal was something. While my fellow-travellers and I were discussing how to pass the night and so much of the next day as must intervene before the jovial blacksmith and the jovial wheelwright would be in a condition to go out on the morass and mend the coach, an honest man stepped forth from the crowd and proposed his unlet floor of two rooms, with supper of eggs and bacon, ale and punch. We joyfully accompanied him home to the strangest of clean houses, where we were well entertained to the satisfaction of all parties. But the novel feature of the entertainment was, that our host was a chair-maker, and that the chairs assigned to us were mere frames, altogether without bottoms of any sort; so that we passed the evening on perches. Nor was this the absurdest consequence; for when we unbent at supper, and any one of us gave way to laughter, he forgot the peculiarity of his position and instantly disappeared. I myself, doubled up into an attitude from which self-extrication was impossible, was taken out of my frame, like a clown in a comic pantomime who has tumbled into a tub, five times by the taper's light during the eggs and bacon.

The Holly-Tree was fast reviving within me a sense of loneliness. I began to feel conscious that my subject would never carry on until I was dug out. I might be a week here,—weeks!

There was a story with a singular idea in it, connected with an Inn I once passed a night at in a picturesque old town on the Welsh border. In a large double-bedded room of this Inn there had been a suicide committed by poison, in one bed, while a tired traveller slept unconscious in the other. After that time, the suicide bed was never used, but the other constantly was; the disused bedstead remaining in the room empty, though as to all other respects in its old state. The story ran, that whoever slept in this room, though never so entire a stranger, from never so far off, was invariably observed to come down in the morning with an impression that he smelt Laudanum, and that his mind always turned upon the subject of suicide; to which, whatever kind of man he might be, he was certain to make some reference if he conversed with any one. [illegible]

[illegible]

through the windows of the student beer-houses at Heidelberg and elsewhere, I put out to sea for the Inns of America, with their four hundred beds apiece, and their eight or nine hundred ladies and gentlemen at dinner every day. Again I stood in the bar-rooms thereof, taking my evening cobbler, julep, sling, or cocktail. Again I listened to my friend the General,—whom I had known for five minutes, in the course of which period he had made me intimate for life with two Majors, who again had made me intimate for life with three Colonels, who again had made me brother to twenty-two civilians,—again, I say, I listened to my friend the General, leisurely expounding the resources of the establishment, as to gentlemen's morning-room, sir; ladies' morning-room, sir; gentlemen's evening-room, sir; ladies' evening-room, sir; ladies and gentlemen's evening reuniting-room, sir; music-room, sir; reading-room, sir; over four hundred sleeping-rooms, sir; and the entire planned and suited within twelve calendar months from the first clearing off of the old encumbrances on the plot, at a cost of five hundred thousand dollars, sir. Again I found, as to my individual way of thinking, that the greater, the more gorgeous, and the more dollarous the establishment was, the less desirable it was. Nevertheless, again I drank my cobbler, julep, sling, or cocktail, in all good-will, to my friend the General, and my friends the Majors, Colonels, and civilians all; full well knowing that, whatever little motes my beamy eyes may have descried in theirs, they belong to a kind, generous, large-hearted, and great people.

I had been going on lately at a quick pace to keep my solitude out of my mind; but here I broke down for good, and gave up the subject. What was I to do? What was to become of me? Into what extremity was I submissively to sink? Supposing that, like Baron Trenck, I looked out for a mouse or spider, and found one, and beguiled my imprisonment by training it? Even that might be dangerous with a view to the future. I might be so far gone when the road did come to be cut through the snow, that, on my way forth, I might burst into tears, and beseech, like the prisoner who was released in his old age from the Bastille, to be taken back again to the five windows, the ten curtains, and the sinuous drapery.

A desperate idea came into my head. Under any other circumstances I should have rejected it; but in the strait at which

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I was, I held it fast. Could I so far overcome the in bashfulness which withheld me from the landlord's tabl the company I might find there, as to call up the Boot ask him to take a chair, — and something in a liquid fo and talk to me? I could. I would. I did.

SECOND BRANCH

THE BOOTS

Where had he been in his time? he repeated, w asked him the question. Lord, he had been every And what had he been? Bless you, he had been ever you could mention a'most!

Seen a good deal? Why, of course he had. I sho so, he could assure me, if I only knew about a twent of what had come in *his* way. Why, it would be ea him, he expected, to tell what he hadn't seen than w had. Ah! A deal, it would.

What was the curiousest thing he had seen? Well didn't know. He couldn't momently name what w curiousest thing he had seen, — unless it was a Unicorn, he see *him* once at a Fair. But supposing a young gen not eight year old was to run away with a fine young of seven, might I think *that* a queer start? Certainly that was a start as he himself had had his blessed eyes he had cleaned the shoes they run away in — and they little that he couldn't get his hand into 'em.

Master Harry Walmer's father, you see, he lived Elmses, down away by Shooter's Hill there, six or seven from Lunnon. He was a gentleman of spirit, and good and held his head up when he walked, and had what y call Fire about him. He wrote poetry, and he rode, a ran, and he cricketed, and he danced, and he acted, and he it all equally beautiful. He was uncommon proud of Harry as was his only child; but he didn't spoil him n He was a gentleman that had a will of his own and a his own, and that would be minded. Consequently, th made quite a companion of the fine bright boy, and w lighted to see him so fond of reading his fairy-books, as

tired of hearing him say my name is Norval, or hearing ing his songs about Young May Moons is beaming love, When he as adores thee has left but the name, and that; he kept the command over the child, and the child *was* a and it 's to be wished more of 'em was!

w did Boots happen to know all this? Why, through under-gardener. Of course he could n't be under-gardener, e always about, in the summer-time, near the windows on wn, a mowing, and sweeping, and weeding, and pruning, his and that, without getting acquainted with the ways of amily. Even supposing Master Harry had n't come to ne morning early, and said, "Cobbs, how should you spell , if you was asked?" and then began cutting it in print er the fence.

could n't say he had taken particular notice of children that; but really it was pretty to see them two mites a about the place together, deep in love. And the courage boy! Bless your soul, he 'd have throwed off his little nd tucked up his little sleeves, and gone in at a Lion, he , if they had happened to meet one, and she had been ened of him. One day he stops, along with her, where was hoeing weeds in the gravel, and says, speaking up, bs," he says, "I like *you*." "Do you, sir? I 'm proud r it." "Yes, I do, Cobbs. Why do I like you, do you Cobbs?" "Don't know, Master Harry, I am sure." use Norah likes you, Cobbs." "Indeed, sir? That 's gratifying." "Gratifying, Cobbs? It 's better than ns of the brightest diamonds to be liked by Norah." ainly, sir." "You 're going away, ain't you, Cobbs?" , sir." "Would you like another situation, Cobbs?" ll, sir, I should n't object, if it was a good 'un." "Then, ," says he, "you shall be our Head Gardener when we arried." And he tucks her, in her little sky-blue mantle, his arm, and walks away.

ots could assure me that it was better than a picter, and to a play, to see them babies, with their long, bright, g hair, their sparkling eyes, and their beautiful light a rambling about the garden, deep in love. Boots was nion that the birds believed they was birds, and kept up 'em, singing to please 'em. Sometimes they would creep the Tulip-tree, and would sit there with their arms round

one another's necks, and their soft cheeks touching, a reading about the Prince and the Dragon, and the good and bad enchanters, and the king's fair daughter. Sometimes he would hear them planning about having a house in a forest, keeping bees and a cow, and living entirely on milk and honey. Once he came upon them by the pond, and heard Master Harry say, "Adorable Norah, kiss me, and say you love me to distraction, or I 'll jump in head foremost." And Boots made no question he would have done it if she had n't complied. On the whole, Boots said it had a tendency to make him feel as if he was in love himself — only he did n't exactly know who with.

"Cobbs," said Master Harry, one evening, when Cobbs was watering the flowers, "I am going on a visit, this present midsummer, to my grandmamma's, at York."

"Are you, indeed, sir? I hope you 'll have a pleasant time. I am going into Yorkshire myself, when I leave here."

"Are you going to your grandmamma's, Cobbs?"

"No, sir. I have n't got such a thing."

"Not as a grandmamma, Cobbs?"

"No, sir."

The boy looked on at the watering of the flowers for a little while, and then said, "I shall be very glad, indeed, to go, Cobbs, — Norah's going."

"You 'll be all right, then, sir," says Cobbs, "with your beautiful sweetheart by your side."

"Cobbs," returned the boy, flushing, "I never let anybody joke about it when I can prevent them."

"It was n't a joke, sir," says Cobbs with humility, — "was n't so meant."

"I am glad of that, Cobbs, because I like you, you know, and you 're going to live with us. — Cobbs!"

"Sir."

"What do you think my grandmamma gives me when I go down there?"

"I could n't so much as make a guess, sir."

"A Bank of England five-pound note, Cobbs."

"Whew!" says Cobbs; "that 's a spanking sum of money Master Harry."

"A person could do a good deal with such a sum of money as that, — could n't a person, Cobbs?"

"I believe you, sir!"

"Cobbs," said the boy, "I'll tell you a secret. At Norah's house they have been joking her about me, and pretending to laugh at our being engaged, — pretending to make game of it, Cobbs!"

"Such, sir," says Cobbs, "is the depravity of human natur."

The boy, looking exactly like his father, stood for a few minutes with his glowing face towards the sunset, and then departed with, "Good night, Cobbs. I'm going in."

If I was to ask Boots how it happened that he was a going to leave that place just at that present time, well, he could n't rightly answer me. He did suppose he might have stayed there till now if he had been anyways inclined. But you see, he was younger then, and he wanted change. That's what he wanted, — change. Mr. Walmers, he said to him when he gave him notice of his intentions to leave, "Cobbs," he says, "have you anythink to complain of? I make the inquiry, because if I find that any of my people really has anythink to complain of, I wish to make it right if I can." "No, sir," says Cobbs; "thanking you, sir, I find myself as well sitiwated here as I could hope to be anywheres. The truth is, sir, that I'm a going to seek my fortun." "Oh, indeed, Cobbs!" he says; "I hope you may find it." And Boots could assure me — which he did, touching his hair with his bootjack, as a salute in the way of his present calling — that he had n't found it yet.

Well, sir! Boots left the Elmses when his time was up, and Master Harry, he went down to the old lady's at York, which old lady would have given that child the teeth out of her head (if she had had any), she was so wrapped up in him. What does that Infant do, — for Infant you may call him, and be within the mark, — but cut away from that old lady's with his Norah, on a expedition to go to Gretna Green and be married!

Sir, Boots was at this identical Holly-Tree Inn (having left it several times since to better himself, but always come back through one thing or another), when, one summer afternoon, the coach drives up, and out of the coach gets them two children. The Guard says to our Governor, "I don't quite make out these little passengers, but the young gentleman's words was that they was to be brought here." The young gentleman gets out; hands his lady out; gives the Guard something for himself; says to our Governor, "We're to stop here to-

night, please. Sitting-room and two bedrooms will be required. Chops and cherry-pudding for two!" and tucks her, in her little sky-blue mantle, under his arm, and walks into the house much bolder than Brass.

Boots leaves me to judge what the amazement of that establishment was when these two tiny creatures all alone by themselves was marched into the Angel, — much more so when he, who had seen them without their seeing him, give the Governor his views of the expedition they was upon. "Cobbs," says the Governor, "if this is so, I must set off myself to York, and quiet their friends' minds. In which case you must keep your eye upon 'em, and humour 'em, till I come back. But before I take these measures, Cobbs, I should wish you to find from themselves whether your opinions is correct." "Sir, to you," says Cobbs, "that shall be done directly."

So Boots goes up stairs to the Angel, and there he finds Master Harry, on a e-normous sofa, — immense at any time, but looking like the Great Bed of Ware, compared with him, — a drying the eyes of Miss Norah with his pocket-hankercher. Their little legs was entirely off the ground, of course, and it really is not possible for Boots to express to me how small them children looked.

"It's Cobbs! It's Cobbs!" cries Master Harry, and comes running to him, and catching hold of his hand. Miss Norah comes running to him on t' other side, and catching hold of his t' other hand, and they both jump for joy.

"I see you a getting out, sir," says Cobbs. "I thought it was you. I thought I could n't be mistaken in your height and figure. What's the object of your journey, sir? — Matrimonial?"

"We are going to be married, Cobbs, at Gretna Green," returned the boy. "We have run away on purpose. Norah has been in rather low spirits, Cobbs; but she'll be happy, now we have found you to be our friend."

"Thank you, sir, and thank *you*, miss," says Cobbs, "for your good opinion. *Did* you bring any luggage with you, sir?"

If I will believe Boots when he gives me his word and honour upon it, the lady had got a parasol, a smelling-bottle, a round and a half of cold buttered toast, eight peppermint drops, and a hair-brush, — seemingly a doll's. The gentleman had got about half a dozen yards of string, a knife, three or four sheets

ıg-paper folded up surprising small, a orang
nug with his name upon it.
ıt may be the exact natur of your plans, si

go on," replied the boy, — which the courag
something wonderful! — "in the morning
to-morrow."
so, sir," says Cobbs. "Would it meet yo
was to accompany you?"
Cobbs said this, they both jumped for joy again,
, "Oh, yes, yes, Cobbs! Yes!"
l, sir!" says Cobbs. "I ou x
lom to give an opinion, what I sho rec
this. I 'm acquainted with a pony, si rnich,
on that I could borrow, would take you and
Valmers, Junior (myself driving, if you approved),
of your journey in a very short space of time. I a
ether sure, sir, that this pony will be at liberty to-mo
even if you had to wait over to-morrow for him,
worth your while. As to the small account here, si
ou was to find yourself running at all short, that don't
because I 'm a part proprietor of this inn, and it could
er."

assures me that when they clapped their hands, and
for joy again, and called him "Good Cobbs!" and
'obbs!" and bent across him to kiss one another in the
of their confiding hearts, he felt himself the meanest
r deceiving 'em that ever was born.
here anything you want just at present, sir?" says
ıortally ashamed of himself.
should like some cakes after dinner," answered Master
folding his arms, putting out one leg, and looking
at him, "and two apples, — and jam. With dinner
d like to have toast and water. But Norah has always
ustomed to half a glass of currant wine at dessert. And
I."
ıall be ordered at the bar, sir," says Cobbs; and away

has the feeling as fresh upon him at this minute of
as he had then, that he would far rather have had it
ıalf a dozen rounds with the Governor than have com-

[redacted]

banned with him; and that he wished with all his heart t[illegible] was any impossible place where those two babies could mak[illegible] impossible marriage, and live impossibly happy ever aft[illegible]. However, as it could n't be, he went into the Governor's [illegible]; and the Governor set off for York in half an hour.

The way in which the women of that house — with[illegible] exception — every one of 'em — married *and* single — to[illegible] that boy when they heard the story, Boots considers s[illegible]. It was as much as he could do to keep 'em from dashing [illegible] the room and kissing him. They climbed up all sorts of [illegible], at the risk of their lives, to look at him through a pane of [illegible]. They was seven deep at the keyhole. They was out of [illegible] minds about him and his bold spirit.

In the evening, Boots went into the room to see how the [illegible]away couple was getting on. The gentleman was on the win[illegible]dow-seat, supporting the lady in his arms. She had tears [illegible] her face, and was lying, very tired and half asleep, w[illegible] head upon his shoulder.

"Mr. Harry Walmers, Junior, fatigued, sir?" says [illegible]

[illegible]

ı the face, and think what a wicked old fathe ;rown up to be. Howsomever, he went on a l ı about the pony. He told 'em that it did happen that the pony was half clipped, you could n't be taken out in that state, for fear it his inside. But that he 'd be finished clippir f the day, and that to-morrow morning at eigh ayton would be ready. Boots's view of the whole c back on it in my room, is, that Mrs. Harry Walm was beginning to give in. She had n't had her h when she went to bed, and she did n't seem quite un g it herself, and its getting in her eyes put her out. put out Master Harry. He sat behind his break tearing away at the jelly, as if he had been his

breakfast Boots is inclined to consider that they drawed , — at least, he knows that many such was found in the e, all on horseback. In the course of the morni Harry rang the bell, — it was surprising how that th l carry on, — and said, in a sprightly way, "Cobbs, ny good walks in this neighbourhood?"

s, sir," says Cobbs. "There 's Love Lane."

t out with you, Cobbs!" — that was that there boy's ion — "you 're joking."

gging your pardon, sir," says Cobbs, "there really is ane. And a pleasant walk it is, and proud shall I be to to yourself and Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior."

orah dear," said Master Harry, "this is curious. We ought to see Love Lane. Put on your bonnet, my st darling, and we will go there with Cobbs."

ts leaves me to judge what a Beast he felt himself to be, that young pair told him, as they all three jogged along r, that they had made up their minds to give him two nd guineas a year as head gardener, on accounts of his so true a friend to 'em. Boots could have wished at the it that the earth would have opened and swallowed him felt so mean, with their beaming eyes a looking at him, lieving him. Well, sir, he turned the conversation as as he could, and he took 'em down Love Lane to the meadows, and there Master Harry would have drowned f in half a moment more, a getting out a water-lily for

her, — but nothing daunted that boy. Well, sir, they tired out. All being so new and strange to 'em, they was as tired as tired could be. And they laid down on a bank of daisy, like the children in the wood, leastways meadows, and fell asleep.

Boots don't know — perhaps I do — but never mind, it don't signify either way — why it made a man fit to make a fool of himself to see them two pretty babies a lying there in the clear still sunny day, not dreaming half so hard when they was asleep as they done when they was awake. But, Lord! when you come to think of yourself, you know, and what a game you have been up to ever since you was in your own cradle, and what a poor sort of a chap you are, and how it's always either Yesterday with you, or else To-morrow, and never To-day, that's where it is!

Well, sir, they woke up at last, and then one thing was getting pretty clear to Boots, namely, that Mrs. Harry Walmerses, Junior's, temper was on the move. When Master Harry took her round the waist, she said he "teased her so;" and when he says, "Norah, my young May Moon, your Harry tease you?" she tells him, "Yes; and I want to go home!"

A biled fowl and baked bread-and-butter pudding brought Mrs. Walmers up a little; but Boots could have wished, he must privately own, to have seen her more sensible to the voice of love, and less abandoning of herself to currants. However, Master Harry, he kept up, and his noble heart was as fond as ever. Mrs. Walmers turned very sleepy about dusk, and began to cry. Therefore, Mrs. Walmers went off to bed as per yesterday; and Master Harry ditto repeated.

About eleven or twelve at night comes back the Governor in a chaise, along with Mr. Walmers and a elderly lady. Mr. Walmers looks amused and very serious, both at once, and says to our missis, "We are much indebted to you, ma'am, for your kind care of our little children, which we can never sufficiently acknowledge. Pray, ma'am, where is my boy?" Our missis says, "Cobbs has the dear child in charge, sir. Cobbs, show Forty!" Then he says to Cobbs, "Ah, Cobbs, I am glad to see you! I understood you was here!" And Cobbs says, "Yes, sir. Your most obedient, sir."

I may be surprised to hear Boots say it, perhaps; but Boots assures me that his heart beat like a hammer, going

"I beg your pardon, sir," says he, while unlocking the door; "I hope you are not angry with Master Harry. For Master Harry is a fine boy, sir, and will do you credit and honour." And Boots signifies to me that, if the fine boy's father had contradicted him in the daring state of mind in which he then was, he thinks he should have "fetched him a crack," and taken the consequences.

But Mr. Walmers only says, "No, Cobbs. No, my good fellow. Thank you!" And the door being opened, goes in.

Boots goes in, too, holding the light, and he sees Mr. Walmers go up to the bedside, bend gently down, and kiss the little sleeping face. Then he stands looking at it for a minute, looking wonderfully like it (they do say he ran away with Mrs. Walmers); and then he gently shakes the little shoulder.

"Harry, my dear boy! Harry!"

Master Harry starts up and looks at him. Looks at Cobbs, too. Such is the honour of that mite that he looks at Cobbs, to see whether he has brought him into trouble.

"I am not angry, my child. I only want you to dress yourself and come home."

"Yes, pa."

Master Harry dresses himself quickly. His breast begins to swell when he has nearly finished, and it swells more and more as he stands, at last, a looking at his father; his father standing a looking at him, the quiet image of him.

"Please may I —" the spirit of that little creatur', and the way he kept his rising tears down! — "please, dear pa — may I — kiss Norah before I go?"

"You may, my child."

So he takes Master Harry in his hand, and Boots leads the way with the candle, and they come to that other bedroom, where the elderly lady is seated by the bed, and poor little Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, is fast asleep. There the father lifts the child up to the pillow, and he lays his little face down for an instant by the little warm face of poor unconscious little Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, and gently draws it to him, — a sight so touching to the chambermaids, who are peeping through the door, that one of them calls out, "It 's a shame to part 'em!" But this chambermaid was always, as Boots informs me, a soft-hearted one. Not that there was any harm in that girl. Far from it.

[redacted]

Finally, Boots says, that's all about it. Mr. W drove away in the chaise, having hold of Master Harry's The elderly lady and Mrs. Harry Walmers, Junior, th never to be (she married a captain long afterwards, and India), went off next day. In conclusion, Boots put it whether I hold with him in two opinions: firstly, that are not many couples on their way to be married who a as innocent of guile as those two children; secondly, would be a jolly good thing for a great many couples o way to be married, if they could only be stopped in ti brought back separately.

THIRD BRANCH

THE BILL

I HAD been snowed up a whole week. The time ha so lightly on my hands that I should have been in great of the fact but for a piece of documentary evidence that la my table.

The road had been dug out of the snow on the previ and the document in question was my Bill. It testif phatically to my having eaten and drunk, and warmed and slept among the sheltering branches of the Hol seven days and nights.

I had yesterday allowed the road twenty-four hours prove itself, finding that I required that additional ma time for the completion of my task. I had ordered my be upon the table, and a chaise to be at the door, "a o'clock to-morrow evening." It was eight o'clock to-m evening when I buckled up my travelling writing-desk leather case, paid my Bill, and got on my warm co wrappers. Of course, no time now remained for my tra on to add a frozen tear to the icicles which were d hanging plentifully about the farmhouse where I had fir Angela. What I had to do was to get across to Liverp the shortest open road, there to meet my heavy bagga embark. It was quite enough to do, and I had not an much time to do it in.

I had taken leave of all my Holly Tree friends, — alm

time being, of my bashfulness, too, — and was standing for a minute at the Inn door watching the hostler as he took her turn at the cord which tied my portmanteau on the se, when I saw lamps coming down towards the Holly-Tree. road was so padded with snow that no wheels were audible; all of us who were standing at the Inn door saw lamps ing on, and at a lively rate, too, between the walls of snow t had been heaped up on either side of the track. The mbermaid instantly divined how the case stood, and called the hostler, "Tom, this is a Gretna job!" The hostler, owing that her sex instinctively scented a marriage, or anyng in that direction, rushed up the yard bawling, "Next r out!" and in a moment the whole establishment was own into commotion.

I had a melancholy interest in seeing the happy man who ed and was beloved; and therefore, instead of driving off at ce, I remained at the Inn door when the fugitives drove up. bright-eyed fellow, muffled in a mantle, jumped out so briskly at he almost overthrew me. He turned to apologise, and, by eaven, it was Edwin!

"Charley!" said he, recoiling. "Gracious powers, what do u do here?"

"Edwin," said I, recoiling, "gracious powers, what do *you* here?" I struck my forehead as I said it, and an insupprtable blaze of light seemed to shoot before my eyes.

He hurried me into the little parlour (always kept with a ow fire in it and no poker), where posting company waited hile their horses were putting to, and, shutting the door, id: —

"Charley, forgive me!"

"Edwin!" I returned. "Was this well? When I loved er so dearly! When I had garnered up my heart so long!" could say no more.

He was shocked when he saw how moved I was, and made he cruel observation that he had not thought I should have aken it so much to heart.

I looked at him. I reproached him no more. But I looked t him.

"My dear, dear Charley," said he, "don't think ill of me, I eseech you! I know you have a right to my utmost confidence, and, believe me, you have ever had it until now. I

abhor secrecy. Its meanness is intolerable to me. But I and my dear girl have observed it for your sake."

He and his dear girl! It steeled me.

"You have observed it for my sake, sir?" said I, wondering how his frank face could face it out so.

"Yes! — and Angela's," said he.

I found the room reeling round in an uncertain way, like a labouring humming-top. "Explain yourself," said I, holding on by one hand to an arm-chair.

"Dear old darling Charley!" returned Edwin, in his cordial manner, "consider! When you were going on so happily with Angela, why should I compromise you with the old gentleman by making you a party to our engagement, and (after he had declined my proposals) to our secret intention? Surely it was better that you should be able honourably to say, 'He never took counsel with me, never told me, never breathed a word of it.' If Angela suspected it, and showed me all the favour and support she could — God bless her for a precious creature and a priceless wife! — I could n't help that. Neither I nor Emmeline ever told her, any more than we told you. And for the same good reason, Charley; trust me, for the same good reason, and no other upon earth!"

Emmeline was Angela's cousin. Lived with her. Had been brought up with her. Was her father's ward. Had property.

"Emmeline is in the chaise, my dear Edwin!" said I, embracing him with the greatest affection.

"My good fellow!" said he, "do you suppose I should be going to Gretna Green without her?"

I ran out with Edwin, I opened the chaise door, I took Emmeline in my arms, I folded her to my heart. She was wrapped in soft white fur, like the snowy landscape; but was warm, and young, and lovely. I put their leaders to with my own hands, I gave the boys a five-pound note apiece, I cheered them as they drove away, I drove the other way myself as hard as I could pelt.

I never went to Liverpool, I never went to America, I went straight back to London, and I married Angela. I have never until this time, even to her, disclosed the secret of my character, and the mistrust and the mistaken journey into which it led me. When she, and they, and our eight children and their seven — I mean Edwin's and Emmeline's, whose eldest girl

old enough now to wear white for herself, and to look very e her mother in it — come to read these pages, as of course y will, I shall hardly fail to be found out at last. Never nd! I can bear it. I began at the Holly-Tree, by idle accint, to associate the Christmas-time of year with human inest, and with some inquiry into, and some care for, the lives those by whom I find myself surrounded. I hope that I am ne the worse for it, and that no one near me or afar off is the rse for it. And I say, May the green Holly-Tree flourish, iking its roots deep into our English ground, and having its minating qualities carried by the birds of heaven all over world!

[redacted]

THE WRECK OF THE GOLDEN MARY

THE WRECK

I WAS apprenticed to the Sea when I was twelve years and I have encountered a great deal of rough weather, literal and metaphorical. It has always been my opinion I first possessed such a thing as an opinion, that the man knows only one subject is next tiresome to the man who kn no subject. Therefore, in the course of my life I have ta myself whatever I could, and, although I am not an edu man, I am able, I am thankful to say, to have an intelli interest in most things.

A person might suppose, from reading the above, that I in the habit of holding forth about number one. That is the case. Just as if I was to come into a room among stra and must either be introduced or introduce myself, so I taken the liberty of passing these few remarks, simply plainly that it may be known who and what I am. I wi no more of the sort than that my name is William Ge Ravender, that I was born at Penrith half a year after my father was drowned, and that I am, on the second day of present blessed Christmas week of one thousand eight hu and fifty-six, fifty-six years of age.

When the rumour first went flying up and down that t was gold in California — which, as most people know, wa fore it was discovered in the British colony of Austra was in the West Indies, trading among the Islands. Bei command and likewise part-owner of a smart schooner, I my work cut out for me, and I was doing it. Conseq gold in California was no business of mine.

But by the time when I came home to England ag thing was as clear as your hand held up before you at n There was Californian gold in the museums and in the smiths' shops, and the very first time I went upon 'Chan met a friend of mine (a seafaring man like myself), with a

nugget hanging to his watch-chain. I handled it. It ke a peeled walnut with bits unevenly broken off here e, and then electrotyped all over, as ever I saw anymy life.

single man (she was too good for this world and for she died six weeks before our marriage-day), so, when iore, I live in my house at Poplar. My house at Popen care of and kept ship-shape by an old lady who was er's maid before I was born. She is as handsome and it as any old lady in the world. She is as fond of me had ever had an only son, and I was he. Well do I herever I sail that she never lays down her head at bout having said, "Merciful Lord! bless and preserve George Ravender, and send him safe home, through r Saviour!" I have thought of it in many a dangerent, when it has done me no harm, I am sure.

house at Poplar, along with this old lady, I lived quiet part of a year; having had a long spell of it among the and having (which was very uncommon in me) taken rather badly. At last, being strong and hearty, and read every book I could lay hold of, right out, I cing down Leadenhall Street, in the City of London, of turning-to again, when I met what I call Smithick ersby, of Liverpool. I chanced to lift up my eyes from n at a ship's chronometer in a window, and I saw him lown upon me, head on.

personally, neither Smithick nor Watersby, that I here nor was I ever acquainted with any man of either of mes, nor do I think that there has been any one of those names in that Liverpool House for years back. in reality the House itself that I refer to; and a wiser t or a truer gentleman never stepped.

dear Captain Ravender!" says he. "Of all the men , I wanted to see you most. I was on my way to

l!" says I. "That looks as if you *were* to see me, '" With that I put my arm in his, and we walked on the Royal Exchange, and when we got there, walked lown at the back of it where the Clock Tower is. We n hour or more, for he had much to say to me. He heme for chartering a new ship of their own to take out

[redacted]

cargo to the diggers and emigrants in California, and to [illegible] and bring back gold. Into the particulars of that scheme I [illegible] not enter, and I have no right to enter. All I say of it is, [illegible] it was a very original one, a very fine one, a very [illegible] and a very lucrative one, beyond doubt.

He imparted it to me as freely as if I had been a [illegible] himself. After doing so, he made me the handsomest [illegible] offer that ever was made to me, boy or man,—or I [illegible] any other captain in the Merchant Navy,—and he [illegible] round turn to finish with:—

"Ravender, you are well aware that the lawlessness of [illegible] coast and country, at present, is as special as the [illegible] in which it is placed. Crews of vessels outward-bound [illegible] as soon as they make the land; crews of vessels [illegible] bound ship at enormous wages, with the express [illegible] murdering the captain and seizing the gold freight; [illegible] trust another, and the devil seems let loose. Now," [illegible] he, "you know my opinion of you, and you know I [illegible] expressing it, and with no singularity, when I [illegible] you are almost the only man on whose integrity, discretion, energy—" etc., etc. For I don't want to repeat what [illegible] I was and am sensible of it.

Notwithstanding [illegible] as I have mentioned, [illegible] for a voyage, still I had some doubts of this voyage. [illegible] I knew, [illegible] being told, that there were [illegible] a long way over and above those [illegible] voyages. It must not be supposed that I was afraid [illegible] but in my opinion, a man has no [illegible] in his own breast for facing dangers, [illegible] what they are, and is able quietly to [illegible] himself, "None of these perils can now take me [illegible] I shall know what to do for the best in any of them [illegible] and greater hands than mine [illegible]" On [illegible] I have [illegible] all the hazards I [illegible] way of [illegible] I shall be prepared [illegible] to save the lives [illegible]

[illegible] I proposed that [illegible] as I liked, and that I [illegible]

dine with him by and by at his club in Pall Mall. I accepted the invitation, and I walked up and down there, quarter-deck fashion, a matter of a couple of hours; now and then looking up at the weathercock, as I might have looked up aloft; and now and then taking a look into Cornhill, as I might have taken a look over the side.

All dinner-time, and all after dinner-time, we talked it over again. I gave him my views of his plan, and he very much approved of the same. I told him I had nearly decided, but not quite. "Well, well," says he, "come down to Liverpool to-morrow with me, and see the Golden Mary." I liked the name (her name was Mary, and she was golden, if golden stands for good), so I began to feel that it was almost done when I said I would go to Liverpool. On the next morning but one we were on board the Golden Mary. I might have known, from his asking me to come down and see her, what she was. I declare her to have been the completest and most exquisite beauty that ever I set my eyes upon.

We had inspected every timber in her, and had come back to the gangway to go ashore from the dock-basin, when I put out my hand to my friend. "Touch upon it," says I, "and touch heartily. I take command of this ship, and I am hers and yours, if I can get John Steadiman for my chief mate."

John Steadiman had sailed with me four voyages. The first voyage John was third mate out to China, and came home second. The other three voyages he was my first officer. At this time of chartering the Golden Mary, he was aged thirty-two. A brisk, bright, blue-eyed fellow, a very neat figure and rather under the middle size, never out of the way and never in it, a face that pleased everybody and that all children took to, a habit of going about singing as cheerily as a blackbird, and a perfect sailor.

We were in one of those Liverpool hackney-coaches in less than a minute, and we cruised about in her upwards of three hours, looking for John. John had come home from Van Diemen's Land barely a month before, and I had heard of him as taking a frisk in Liverpool. We asked after him, among many other places, at the two boarding-houses he was fondest of, and we found he had had a week's spell at each of them; but he had gone here and gone there, and had set off "to lay out on the main-to'-gallant-yard of the highest Welsh mountain" (so he

had told the people of the house), and where he might be [illegible] or when he might come back, nobody could tell us. But [illegible] surprising, to be sure, to see how every face brightened [illegible] moment there was mention made of the name of Mr Stea[illegible].

We were taken aback at meeting with no better [illegible] we had wore ship and put her head for my friends, when [illegible] were jogging through the streets, I clap my eyes on J[illegible] self coming out of a toy-shop! He was carrying a litt[illegible] and conducting two uncommon pretty women to their [illegible] and he told me afterwards that he had never in his life [illegible] one of the three before, but that he was so taken with the[illegible] looking in at the toy-shop while they were buying the [illegible] cranky Noah's Ark, very much down by the head, that he [illegible] gone in and asked the ladies' permission to treat him to a [illegible] ably correct cutter there was in the window, in order that a handsome boy might not grow up with a lubberly [illegible] naval architecture.

We stood off and on until the ladies' coachman began [illegible] way, and then we hailed John. On his coming aboard [illegible] told him, very gravely, what I had said to my friend. It [illegible] him, as he said himself, amidships. He was quite [illegible] it. "Captain Ravender," were John Steadiman's w[illegible] an opinion from you is true commendation, and I'll sa[illegible] the world with you for twenty years if you leant the [illegible] stand by you for ever!" And now indeed I felt that [illegible] done, and that the Golden Mary was afloat.

Grass never grew yet under the feet of Smith [illegible] by. The riggers were out of that ship in a f[illegible] and we had begun taking in cargo. John was always [illegible] seeing everything stowed with his own eyes, and [illegible] went aboard myself early or late, whether he was [illegible] [illegible] or on deck at the hatchway, or overhauling [illegible] making up poetry in praise of the Black Roses of E[illegible] Blue Bells of Scotland, and the female Shamrock [illegible] of a certainty I heard him singing like a blackbird.

We had room for twenty passengers. Our sailing [illegible] ment was no sooner out, than we might have taken [illegible] [illegible]. In entering our men, I and John Steadiman [illegible] picked them, and we entered none but good hands [illegible] as were to be found in that port. And so, in a good [illegible] the best built, well owned, well arranged, well officered [illegible]

manned, well found in all respects, we parted with our pilot at quarter past four o'clock in the afternoon of the seventh of March, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one, and stood with a fair wind out to sea.

It may be easily believed that up to that time I had had no leisure to be intimate with my passengers. The most of them were then in their berths sea-sick; however, in going among them, telling them what was good for them, persuading them not to be there, but to come up on deck and feel the breeze, and rousing them with a joke, or a comfortable word, I made acquaintance with them, perhaps, in a more friendly and confidential way from the first than I might have done at the cabin table.

Of my passengers, I need only particularise, just at present, a bright-eyed, blooming young wife who was going out to join her husband in California, taking with her their only child, a little girl of three years old, whom he had never seen; a sedate young woman in black, some five years older (about thirty as I should say), who was going out to join a brother; and an old gentleman, a good deal like a hawk if his eyes had been better and not so red, who was always talking, morning, noon, and night, about the gold discovery. But whether he was making the voyage, thinking his old arms could dig for gold, or whether his speculation was to buy it, or to barter for it, or to cheat for it, or to snatch it anyhow from other people, was his secret. He kept his secret.

These three and the child were the soonest well. The child was a most engaging child, to be sure, and very fond of me; though I am bound to admit that John Steadiman and I were borne on her pretty little books in reverse order, and that he was captain there, and I was mate. It was beautiful to watch her with John, and it was beautiful to watch John with her. Few would have thought it possible, to see John playing at bo-peep round the mast, that he was the man who had caught up an iron bar and struck a Malay and a Maltese dead, as they were gliding with their knives down the cabin stair aboard the bark Old England, when the captain lay ill in his cot, off Saugar Point. But he was; and give him his back against a bulwark, he would have done the same by half a dozen of them. The name of the young mother was Mrs. Atherfield, the name of the young lady in black was Miss Coleshaw, and the name of the old gentleman was Mr. Rarx.

As the child had a quantity of shining fair hair, cluste curls all about her face, and as her name was Lucy, Stea gave her the name of the Golden Lucy. So we had the Lucy and the Golden Mary; and John kept up the idea extent as he and the child went playing about the decks, believe she used to think the ship was alive somehow — or companion, going to the same place as herself. She l be by the wheel, and, in fine weather, I have often stood man whose trick it was at the wheel, only to hear her, near my feet, talking to the ship. Never had a child doll before, I suppose; but she made a doll of the Mary, and used to dress her up by tying ribbons and lit of finery to the belaying-pins; and nobody ever moved unless it was to save them from being blown away.

Of course I took charge of the two young women, and I them "my dear," and they never minded, knowing that wl I said was said in a fatherly and protecting spirit. them their places on each side of me at dinner, Mrs. At on my right and Miss Coleshaw on my left; and I the unmarried lady to serve out the breakfast, and the lady to serve out the tea. Likewise I said to my black in their presence, "Tom Snow, these two ladies are mistresses of this house, and do you obey their orders eq at which Tom laughed, and they all laughed.

Old Mr. Rarx was not a pleasant man to look at, n talk to, or to be with, for no one could help seeing that a sordid and selfish character, and that he had warped and further out of the straight with time. Not but what on his best behaviour with us, as everybody was, for no bickering among us, for'ard or aft. I only mean t was not the man one would have chosen for a messmate choice there had been, one might even have gone a few out of one's course to say, "No! Not him!" But the one curious inconsistency in Mr Rarx. That was, that an astonishing interest in the child. He looked, and add, he was, one of the last of men to care at all for a to care much for any human creature. Still, he went to be habitually uneasy if the child was long on deck, his sight. He was always afraid of her falling overbo falling down a hatchway, or of a block or what not down upon her from the rigging in the working of the s

her getting some hurt or other. He used to look at her and ch her, as if she was something precious to him. He was ays solicitous about her not injuring her health, and con- ntly entreated her mother to be careful of it. This was so ch the more curious, because the child did not like him, but d to shrink away from him, and would not even put out her nd to him without coaxing from others. I believe that every l on board frequently noticed this, and not one of us under- od it. However, it was such a plain fact that John Steadi- n said more than once, when old Mr. Rarx was not within shot, that if the Golden Mary felt a tenderness for the dear l gentleman she carried in her lap, she must be bitterly lous of the Golden Lucy.

Before I go any further with this narrative, I will state that r ship was a bark of three hundred tons, carrying a crew of hteen men, a second mate in addition to John, a carpenter, armourer or smith, and two apprentices (one a Scotch boy, or little fellow). We had three boats; the long-boat, capa- of carrying twenty-five men; the cutter, capable of carrying een; and the surf-boat, capable of carrying ten. I put down capacity of these boats according to the numbers they re really meant to hold.

We had tastes of bad weather and head-winds, of course; t, on the whole, we had as fine a run as any reasonable man ald expect, for sixty days. I then began to enter two marks in the ship's Log and in my Journal: first, that there s an unusual and amazing quantity of ice; second, that the ghts were most wonderfully dark, in spite of the ice.

For five days and a half it seemed quite useless and hopeless alter the ship's course so as to stand out of the way of the e. I made what southing I could; but all that time we ere beset by it. Mrs. Atherfield, after standing [illegible] nce, looking for some time in an awed manner [illegible] ergs that surrounded us, said in a whisper [illegible] avender, it looks as if the whole solid earth [illegible] e, and broken up!" I said to her, laughing [illegible] r that it does to your inexperience [illegible] had never seen a twentieth part of [illegible] ality. I was pretty much of her opinion.

However, at two P. M. on the afternoon [illegible] to say, when we were sixty-six days [illegible]

who had gone aloft, sang out from the top that the sea was clear ahead. Before four P. M. a strong breeze springing up right astern, we were in open water at sunset. The breeze then freshening into half a gale of wind, and the Golden Mary being a very fast sailer, we went before the wind merrily, all night.

I had thought it impossible that it could be darker than it had been, until the sun, moon, and stars should fall out of the heavens, and Time should be destroyed; but it had been next to light, in comparison with what it was now. The darkness was so profound that looking into it was painful and oppressive — like looking, without a ray of light, into a dense black bandage put as close before the eyes as it could be, without touching them. I doubled the lookout, and John and I stood in the bow side by side, never leaving it all night. Yet I should no more have known that he was near me when he was silent, without putting out my arm and touching him, than I should if he had turned in and been fast asleep below. We were not so much looking out, all of us, as listening to the utmost, both with our eyes and ears.

Next day, I found that the mercury in the barometer, which had risen steadily since we cleared the ice, remained steady. I had had very good observations, with now and then the interruption of a day or so, since our departure. I got the sun at noon, and found that we were in Lat. 58° S., Long. 60° W., off New South Shetland, in the neighbourhood of Cape Horn. We were sixty-seven days out, that day. The ship's reckoning was accurately worked and made up. The ship did her duty admirably, all on board were well, and all hands were as smart, efficient, and contented, as it was possible to be.

When the night came on again as dark as before, it was the eighth night I had been on deck. Nor had I taken more than a very little sleep in the daytime, my station being always near the helm, and often at it, while we were among the ice. Few but those who have tried it can imagine the difficulty and pain of only keeping the eyes open — physically open — under such circumstances, in such darkness. They get struck by the darkness, and blinded by the darkness. They make patterns in it, and they flash in it, as if they had gone out of your head to look at you. On the turn of midnight, John Steadiman, who was alert and fresh (for I had always made him turn in by

day), said to me, "Captain Ravender, I entreat of you to go below. I am sure you can hardly stand, and your voice is getting weak, sir. Go below, and take a little rest. I 'll call you if a block chafes." I said to John in answer, "Well, well, John! Let us wait till the turn of one o'clock, before we talk about that." I had just had one of the ship's lanterns held up, that I might see how the night went by my watch, and it was then twenty minutes after twelve.

At five minutes before one, John sang out to the boy to bring the lantern again, and, when I told him once more what the time was, entreated and prayed of me to go below. "Captain Ravender," says he, "all 's well; we can't afford to have you laid up for a single hour; and I respectfully and earnestly beg of you to go below."

The end of it was that I agreed to do so, on the understanding that, if I failed to come up of my own accord within three hours, I was to be punctually called. Having settled that, I left John in charge. But I called him to me once afterwards, to ask him a question. I had been to look at the barometer, and had seen the mercury still perfectly steady, and had come up the companion again to take a last look about me — if I can use such a word in reference to such darkness — when I thought that the waves, as the Golden Mary parted them and shook them off, had a hollow sound in them; something that I fancied was a rather unusual reverberation. I was standing by the quarter-deck rail on the starboard side, when I called John aft to me, and bade him listen. He did so with the greatest attention. Turning to me he then said, "Rely upon it, Captain Ravender, you have been without rest too long, and the novelty is only in the state of your sense of hearing." I thought so, too, by that time, and I think so now, though I can never know for absolute certain in this world whether it was or not.

When I left John Steadiman in charge, the ship was still going at a great rate through the water. The wind still blew right astern. Though she was making great way, she was under shortened sail, and had no more than she could easily carry. All was snug, and nothing complained. There was a pretty sea running, but not a very high sea neither, nor at all a confused one.

I turned in, as we seamen say, all standing. The meaning

[redacted]

of that is, I did not pull my clothes off — no, not even so much as my coat, though I did my shoes, for my feet were badly swelled with the deck. There was a little swing-lamp alight in my cabin. I thought, as I looked at it before shutting my eyes, that I was so tired of darkness, and troubled by darkness, that I could have gone to sleep best in the midst of a million of flaming gas-lights. That was the last thought I had before I went off, except the prevailing thought that I should not be able to get to sleep at all.

I dreamed that I was back at Penrith again, and was trying to get round the church, which had altered its shape very much since I last saw it, and was cloven all down the middle of the steeple in a most singular manner. Why I wanted to get round the church, I don't know; but I was as anxious to do it as if my life depended on it. Indeed, I believe it did, in the dream. For all that, I could not get round the church. I was still trying, when I came against it with a violent shock, and was flung out of my cot against the ship's side. Shrieks and a terrific outcry struck me far harder than the bruising timbers, and amidst sounds of grinding and crashing, and a heavy rushing and breaking of water, — sounds I understood too well, — I made my way on deck. It was not an easy thing to do, for the ship heeled over frightfully, and was beating in a furious manner.

I could not see the men as I went forward, but I could hear that they were hauling in sail, in disorder. I had my trumpet in my hand, and, after directing and encouraging them in this for a little while, I hailed first John Steadiman, and then my second mate, Mr. William Rames. Both answered clearly and steadily. Now, I had practised them and all my crew, as I have ever made it a custom to practise all who sail with me, to take certain stations and wait my orders, in case of any unexpected crisis. When my voice was heard hailing, and their voices were heard answering, I was aware, through all the noises of the ship and sea, and all the crying of the passengers below, that there was a pause. "Are you ready, Rames?" "Ay, ay, sir!" "Then light up, for God's sake!" In a moment he and another were burning blue-lights, and the ship and all on board seemed to be enclosed in a mist of light, under a great black dome.

The light shone up so high that I could see the huge Iceberg

upon which we had struck, cloven at the top an middle, exactly like Penrith Church in my dream. moment I could see the watch last relieved, crow down on deck; I could see Mrs. Atherfield and Mi thrown about on the top of the companion as they bring the child up from below; I could see that the going with the shock and the beating of the ship; the frightful breach stove in on the starboard sid length of the vessel, and the sheathing and timbe up; I could see that the Cutter was disabled, in broken fragments; and I could see every eye turne It is my belief that if there had been ten thousand e should have seen them all, with their different looks. this in a moment. But you must consider what a m

I saw the men, as they looked at me, fall tow appointed stations like good men and true. If she righted, they could have done very little there or anyw die — not that it is little for a man to die at his post — I they could have done nothing to save the passengers and selves. Happily, however, the violence of the shock with which we had so determinedly borne down direct on that fatal Iceberg, as if it had been our destination instead of our destruction, had so smashed and pounded the ship that she got off in this same instant and righted. I did not want the carpenter to tell me she was filling and going down; I could see and hear that. I gave Rames the word to lower the long-boat and the surf-boat, and I myself told off the men for each duty. Not one hung back, or came before the other. I now whispered to John Steadiman, "John, I stand at the gangway here, to see every soul on board safe over the side. You shall have the next post of honour, and shall be the last but one to leave the ship. Bring up the passengers, and range them behind me; and put what provision and water you can get at, in the boats. Cast your eye for'ard, John, and you'll see you have not a moment to lose."

My noble fellows got the boats over the side as orderly as I ever saw boats lowered with any sea running, and, when they were launched, two or three of the nearest men in them as they held on, rising and falling with the swell, called out, looking up at me, "Captain Ravender, if anything goes wrong with us and you are saved, remember we stood by you!" — "We'll all

stand by one another ashore, yet, please God, my lads!" says I. "Hold on bravely, and be tender with the women."

The women were an example to us. They trembled very much, but they were quiet and perfectly collected. "Kiss me, Captain Ravender," says Mrs. Atherfield, "and God in heaven bless you, you [illegible] man!" "My dear," says I, "those words are better for me than a life-boat." I held her child in my arms till she was in the boat, and then kissed the [illegible] and handed her safe down. I now said to the people in her, "You have got your freight, my lads, all but me, and I am not coming yet awhile. Pull away from the ship, and keep off!"

That was the long-boat. Old Mr. Rarx was one of her complement, and he was the only passenger who had greatly misbehaved since the ship struck. Others had been a little wild, which was not to be wondered at, and not very [illegible]; but he had made a lamentation and uproar which was [illegible] generous for the people to hear, as there is always [illegible] weakness [illegible]. He [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

"With a will, lads! She 's reeling!" We were not an inch too far out of the inner vortex of her going down, when, by the blue-light which John Mullion still burnt in the bow of the surf-boat, we saw her lurch, and plunge to the bottom head foremost. The child cried, weeping wildly, "Oh, the dear Golden Mary! Oh, look at her! Save her! Save the poor Golden Mary!" And then the light burnt out, and the black dome seemed to come down upon us.

I suppose if we had all stood a top of a mountain, and seen the whole remainder of the world sink away from under us, we could hardly have felt more shocked and solitary than we did when we knew we were alone on the wide ocean, and that the beautiful ship in which most of us had been securely asleep within half an hour was gone for ever. There was an awful silence in our boat, and such a kind of palsy on the rowers and the man at the rudder that I felt they were scarcely keeping her before the sea. I spoke out then, and said, "Let every one here thank the Lord for our preservation." All the voices answered (even the child's), "We thank the Lord!" I then said the Lord's Prayer, and all hands said it after me with a solemn murmuring. Then I gave the word "Cheerily, oh, men, cheerily!" and I felt that they were handling the boat again as a boat ought to be handled.

The surf-boat now burnt another blue-light to show us where they were and we made for her, and laid ourselves as nearly alongside of her as we dared. I had always kept my boats with a coil or two of good stout stuff in each of them, so both boats had a rope at hand. We made a shift, with much labour and trouble, to get near enough to one another to divide the blue-lights (they were no use after that night, for the sea-water soon got at them), and to get a tow-rope out between us. All night long we kept together, sometimes obliged to cast off the rope, and sometimes getting it out again, and all of us wearying for the morning — which appeared so long in coming that old Mr. Rarx screamed out, in spite of his fears of me, "The world is drawing to an end, and the sun will never rise any more!"

When the day broke, I found that we were all huddled together in a miserable manner. We were deep in the water; being, as I found on mustering, thirty-one in number, or at least six too many. In the surf-boat they were fourteen in number, being at least four too many. The first thing I did was

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to get myself passed to the rudder—which I took from that time—and to get Mrs. Atherfield, her child, and Miss Coleshaw passed on to sit next me. As to old Mr. Rarx, I put him in the bow, as far from us as I could. And I put some of the best men near us, in order that, if I should drop, there might be a skilful hand ready to take the helm.

The sea moderating as the sun came up, though the sky was cloudy and wild, we spoke the other boat, to know what stores they had, and to overhaul what we had. I had a compass in my pocket, a small telescope, a double-barrelled pistol, a knife, and a fire-box and matches. Most of my men had knives, and some had a little tobacco; some, a pipe as well. We had a mug among us, and an iron spoon. As to provisions, there were in my boat two bags of biscuit, one piece of raw beef, one piece of raw pork, a bag of coffee, roasted but not ground (thrown in, I imagine, by mistake, for something else), two small casks of water, and about half a gallon of [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] feeling. [illegible] said a few [illegible]

my fellow-voyagers on the subject of the small st[ore] which our lives depended if they were preserved [in the] deep, and on the rigid necessity of our eking it o[ut in a] frugal manner. One and all replied that whatev[er I] thought best to lay down should be strictly kept t[o]. [I made] a pair of scales out of a thin scrap of iron-plat[ing and] twine, and I got together for weights such of [the] buttons among us as I calculated made up some [] two ounces. This was the allowance of solid food served once a day to each, from that time to the end; with the a[ddi]tion of a coffee-berry, or sometimes half a one, whe[n the] weather was very fair, for breakfast. We had nothi[ng] whatever but half a pint of water each per day, and som[etimes] when we were coldest and weakest, a teaspoonful of rum served out as a dram. I know how learnedly it can be s[hown] that rum is poison, but I also know that in this case, as in similar cases I have ever read of, — which are numerous, — n[o] words can express the comfort and support derived from i[t]. Nor have I the least doubt that it saved the lives of far mor[e] than half our number. Having mentioned half a pint of water as our daily allowance, I ought to observe that sometimes we had less, and sometimes we had more; for much rain fell, and we caught it in a canvas stretched for the purpose.

Thus, at that tempestuous time of the year, and in that tempestuous part of the world, we shipwrecked people rose and fell with the waves. It is not my intention to relate (if I can avoid it) such circumstances appertaining to our doleful condition as have been better told in many other narratives of the kind than I can be expected to tell them. I will only note, in so many passing words, that day after day and night after night, we received the sea upon our backs to prevent it from swamping the boat; that one party was always kept baling, and that every hat and cap among us soon got worn out, though patched up fifty times, as the only vessels we had for that service; that another party lay down in the bottom of the boat, while a third rowed; and that we were soon all in boils and blisters and rags.

The other boat was a source of such anxious interest to all of us that I used to wonder whether, if we were saved, the time could ever come when the survivors in this boat of ours could be at all indifferent to the fortunes of the survivors in that. We

got out a few rope whenever the weather permitted, but that did not often happen, and how we two parties kept within the same horizon, as we did, He, who mercifully permitted it to be so for our consolation, only knows. I never shall forget the looks with which, when the morning light came, we used to gaze about us over the stormy waters, for the other boat. We once parted company for seventy two hours, and we believed them to have gone down, as they did us. The joy on both sides when we came within view of one another again had something in a manner Divine in it; each was so forgetful of individual suffering, in tears of delight and sympathy for the people in the other boat.

I have been wanting to get round to the individual or personal part of my subject, as I call it, and the foregoing incident puts me in the right way. The patience and good [illegible] aboard of us was wonderful. I was not surprised by it in the women, for all men born of women know what great [illegible] they will [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

teeth were sad to hear. The child cried a little lost playfellow, the Golden Mary; but hardly ev afterwards; and when the state of the weather m she used now and then to be held up in the arms to look over the sea for John Steadiman's boa golden hair and the innocent face now, betwe driving clouds, like an angel going to fly away.

It happened on the second day, towards nig Atherfield, in getting little Lucy to sleep, san She had a soft, melodious voice, and, when she h our people up and begged for another. She sang and, after it had fallen d nued te From that time, whenever thing o e near sea and wind, and while sl l any voice left, no serve the people but that s should sing at sunset. one al did, and always ended wit the Evening Hymn. We mo took up the last line, and shed tears when it was done, but miserably. We had a prayer night and morning, also, when weather allowed of it.

Twelve nights and eleven days we had been driving in the boat, when old Mr. Rarx began to be delirious, and to cry out to me to throw the gold overboard or it would sink us, and we should all be lost. For days past the child had been declining, and that was the great cause of his wildness. He had been over and over again shrieking out to me to give her all the remaining meat, to give her all the remaining rum, to save her at any cost, or we should all be ruined. At this time she lay in her mother's arms at my feet. One of her little hands was almost always creeping about her mother's neck or chin. I had watched the wasting of the little hand, and I knew it was nearly over.

The old man's cries were so discordant with the mother's love and submission that I called out to him in an angry voice, unless he held his peace on the instant, I would order him to be knocked on the head and thrown overboard. He was mute then, until the child died, very peaceably, an hour afterwards; which was known to all in the boat by the mother's breaking out into lamentations for the first time since the wreck — for she had great fortitude and constancy, though she was a little, gentle woman. Old Mr. Rarx then became quite ungovernable, tearing what rags he had on him, raging in imprecations, and

calling to me that if I had thrown the gold overboard (always the gold with him!) I might have saved the child. "And now," says he, in a terrible voice, "we shall founder, and all go to the Devil, for our sins will sink us, when we have no innocent child to bear us up!" We so discovered, with astonishment, that this old wretch had only cared for the life of the pretty little creature dear to all of us, because of the influence he superstitiously hoped she might have in preserving him! Altogether it was too much for the smith or armourer, who was sitting next the old man, to bear. He took him by the throat and rolled him under the thwarts, where he lay still enough for hours afterwards.

All that thirteenth night, Miss Coleshaw, lying across my knees as I kept the helm, comforted and supported the poor mother. Her child, covered with a pea-jacket of mine, lay in her lap. It troubled me all night to think that there was no Prayer Book among us, and that I could remember but very few of the exact words of the burial service. [illegible]

satisfied myself that the instances in which human last distress have fed upon each other are exceeding have very seldom indeed (if ever) occurred when the distress, however dreadful their extremity, have been kno to moderate forbearance and restraint; I say, t long before quite satisfied my mind on this topic, ful whether there might not have been in former cases b harm and danger from keeping it out of sight and pretendi not to think of it. I felt doubtful whether some minds, gro ing weak with fasting and exposure and having such a terr idea to dwell upon in secret, might not magnify it until it to have an awful attraction about it. This was not a n thought of mine, for it had grown out of my reading. ever, it came over me stronger than it had ever done before—as it had reason for doing—in the boat, and on the fourth day I decided that I would bring out into the light that unformed fear which must have been more or less darkly in every brain among us. Therefore, as a means of beguiling the time and inspiring hope, I gave them the best summary in my power of Bligh's voyage of more than three thousand miles in an open boat, after the Mutiny of the Bounty, and of the wonderful preservation of that boat's crew. They listened throughout with great interest, and I concluded by telling them that, in my opinion, the happiest circumstance in the whole narrative was that Bligh, who was no delicate man either, had solemnly placed it on record therein that he was sure and certain that under no conceivable circumstances whatever would that emaciated party, who had gone through all the pains of famine, have preyed on one another. I cannot describe the visible relief which this spread through the boat, and how the tears stood in every eye. From that time I was as well convinced as Bligh himself that there was no danger, and that this phantom, at any rate, did not haunt us.

Now, it was a part of Bligh's experience that, when the people in his boat were most cast down, nothing did them so much good as hearing a story told by one of their number. When I mentioned that, I saw that it struck the general attention as much as it did my own, for I had not thought of it until I came to it in my summary. This was on the day after Mrs. Atherfield first sang to us. I proposed that, whenever the weather would permit, we should have a story two hours after

dinner" I always issued the allowance I have mentioned at one o'clock, and called it by that name, as well as our song at sunset. The proposal was received with a cheerful satisfaction that warmed my heart within me; and I do not say too much when I say that those two periods in the four and twenty hours were expected with positive pleasure, and were really enjoyed by all hands. Spectres as we soon were in our bodily wasting, our imaginations did not perish like the gross flesh upon our bones. Music and Adventure, two of the great gifts of Providence to mankind, could charm us long after that was lost.

The wind was almost always against us after the second day; and for many days together we could not nearly hold our own. We had all varieties of bad weather. We had rain, hail, snow, wind, mist, thunder and lightning. Still the boats lived through the heavy seas, and still we perishing people rose and fell with the great waves.

Sixteen nights and fifteen days, twenty nights and nineteen days, twenty-four nights and twenty-three days. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

hair every day; and I took particular notice that this was always before she sang her song at night, when every one looked at her. But she never did it after the loss of her darling; and it would have been now all tangled with dirt and wet, but that Miss Coleshaw was careful of it long after she was herself, and would sometimes smooth it down with her weak, thin hands.

We were past mustering a story now; but one day, at about this period, I reverted to the superstition of old Mr. Rarx concerning the Golden Lucy, and told them that nothing vanished from the eye of God, though much might pass away from the eyes of men. "We were all of us," says I, "children once; and our baby feet have strolled in green woods ashore; and our baby hands have gathered flowers in gardens, where the birds were singing. The children that we were are not lost to the great knowledge of our Creator. Those innocent creatures will appear with us before Him, and plead for us. What we were in the best time of our generous youth will arise and go with us, too. The purest part of our lives will not desert us at the pass to which all of us here present are gliding. What we were then will be as much in existence before Him as what we are now." They were no less comforted by this consideration than I was myself; and Miss Coleshaw, drawing my ear nearer to her lips, said, "Captain Ravender, I was on my way to marry a disgraced and broken man, whom I dearly loved when he was honourable and good. Your words seem to have come out of my own poor heart." She pressed my hand upon it, smiling.

Twenty-seven nights and twenty-six days. We were in no want of rain-water, but we had nothing else. And yet, even now, I never turned my eyes upon a waking face but it tried to brighten before mine. Oh, what a thing it is, in a time of danger and in the presence of death, the shining of a face upon a face! I have heard it broached that orders should be given in great new ships by electric telegraph. I admire machinery as much as any man, and am as thankful to it as any man can be for what it does for us. But it will never be a substitute for the face of a man, with his soul in it, encouraging another man to be brave and true. Never try it for that. It will break down like a straw.

I now began to remark certain changes in myself which I did not like. They caused me much disquiet. I often saw the Golden Lucy in the air above the boat. I often saw her I have

[redacted]

spoken of before, sitting beside me. I saw the Golden Mary go down, as she really had gone down, twenty times in a day. And yet the sea was mostly, to my thinking, not sea neither, but moving country and extraordinary mountainous regions, the like of which have never been beheld. I felt it time to leave my last words regarding John Steadiman, in case any lips should last out to repeat them to any living ears. I said that John had told me (as he had on deck) that he had sung out "Breakers ahead!" the instant they were audible, and had tried to wear ship, but she struck before it could be done. (His cry, I dare say, had made my dream.) I said that the circumstances were altogether without warning, and out of any course that could have been guarded against; that the same [illegible] would have happened if I had been in charge; and that John was not to blame, but from first to last had done his duty [illegible], like the man he was. I tried to write it down in my pocket-book, but could make no words, though I knew what the words were that I wanted to make. When it had come to that, [illegible] hands [illegible] he was dead and [illegible] laid me down [illegible] in the [illegible] of the boat, and she and the Golden Lucy [illegible] me to sleep.

[illegible] written by John Steadiman, [illegible]

On the [illegible] day after the [illegible] of the Golden Mary [illegible] John Steadiman, [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

"What does it mean?" says Rames to me in a trembling sort of voice. "Do they signal a sail in ‹
"Hush, for God's sake!" says I, clapping my ha‹ mouth. "Don't let the people hear you. They 'll ‹ together if we mislead them about that signal. Wa‹ I have another look at it."

I held on by him, for he had set me all of a trem‹ his notion of a sail in sight, and watched for the ‹ again. Up she rose on the top of another roller. I made o‹ the signal clearly, that second time, and saw that it was ‹ half-mast high.

"Rames," says I, "it's a signal of distress. Pass the w‹ forward to keep her before the sea, and no more. We must get the long-boat within hailing distance of us as soon a‹ possible."

I dropped down into my old place at the tiller without an‹ other word — for the thought went through me like a kn‹ that something had happened to Captain Ravender. I shou‹ consider myself unworthy to write another line of this stat‹ ment if I had not made up my mind to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, — and I must, therefore, confess plainly that now, for the first time, my heart sank within me. This weakness on my part was produced in some degree, as I take it, by the exhausting effects of previous anxiety and grief.

Our provisions — if I may give that name to what we had left — were reduced to the rind of one lemon and about a couple of handfuls of coffee-berries. Besides these great distresses, caused by the death, the danger, and the suffering among my crew and passengers, I had had a little distress of my own to shake me still more, in the death of the child whom I had got to be very fond of on the voyage out — so fond that I was secretly a little jealous of her being taken in the long-boat instead of mine when the ship foundered. It used to be a great comfort to me, and I think to those with me also, after we had seen the last of the Golden Mary, to see the Golden Lucy, held up by the men in the long-boat, when the weather allowed it, as the best and brightest sight they had to show. She looked, at the distance we saw her from, almost like a little white bird in the air. To miss her for the first time, when the weather lulled a little again, and we all looked out for our

[redacted]

white bird and looked in vain, was a sore disappointment. I see the men's heads bowed down and the captain's hand pointing into the sea when we hailed the long-boat, a few days after, gave me as heavy a shock and as sharp a pang of heartache to bear as ever I remember suffering in all my life. I [illegible] mention these things to show that if I did give way a little at first, under the dread that our captain was lost to us, it was not without having been a good deal shaken beforehand by more trials of one sort or another than often fall to one man's share.

I had got over the choking in my throat with the help of a drop of water, and had steadied my mind again so as to be prepared against the worst, when I heard the hail (Lord help the poor fellows, how weak it sounded!) :—

"Surf-boat ahoy!"

I looked up, and there were our companions in misfortune tossing abreast of us; not so near that we could make out the features of any of them, but near enough, with [illegible] for [illegible] to make their voices heard [illegible] when the wind was weak [illegible]

I answered the hail, and waited a bit, and heard [illegible] the [illegible] captain's name [illegible] not [illegible] the words that reached us were

"[illegible]"

[illegible]

"[illegible]"

[illegible]

"[illegible]"

[illegible]

by the rest, and he hailed back the blessed words (a very faint hope went a very long way with people in our desperate situation): "Not yet!"

The relief felt by me, and by all with me, when we knew that our captain, though unfitted for duty, was not lost to us, it is not in words — at least, not in such words as a man like me can command — to express. I did my best to cheer the men by telling them what a good sign it was that we were not as badly off yet as we had feared; and then communicated what instructions I had to give to William Rames, who was to be left in command in my place when I took charge of the long-boat. After that there was nothing to be done but to wait for the chance of the wind dropping at sunset, and the sea going down afterwards, so as to enable our weak crews to lay the two boats alongside of each other, without undue risk — or, to put it plainer, without saddling ourselves with the necessity for any extraordinary exertion of strength or skill. Both the one and the other had now been starved out of us for days and days together.

At sunset the wind suddenly dropped, but the sea, which had been running high for so long a time past, took hours after that before it showed any signs of getting to rest. The moon was shining, the sky was wonderfully clear, and it could not have been, according to my calculations, far off midnight, when the long, slow, regular swell of the calming ocean fairly set in, and I took the responsibility of lessening the distance between the long-boat and ourselves.

It was, I dare say, a delusion of mine; but I thought I had never seen the moon shine so white and ghastly anywhere, either at sea or on land, as she shone that night while we were approaching our companions in misery. When there was not much more than a boat's length between us, and the white light streamed cold and clear over all our faces, both crews rested on their oars with one great shudder, and stared over the gunwale of either boat, panic-stricken at the first sight of each other.

"Any lives lost among you?" I asked, in the midst of that frightful silence.

The men in the long-boat huddled together like sheep at the sound of my voice.

"None yet but the child, thanks be to God!" answered one among them.

[redacted]

And at the sound of his voice, all my men shrank together like the men in the long-boat. I was afraid to let the shock produced by our first meeting at close quarters after the dreadful changes that wet, cold, and famine had produced last one moment longer than could be helped; so without giving time for any more questions and answers, I commanded the men to lay the two boats close alongside of each other. When I rose up and committed the tiller to the hands of Rames, all my poor fellows raised their white faces imploringly to mine. "Don't leave us, sir," they said, "don't leave us." "I leave you," says I, "under the command and the guidance of Mr. William Rames, as good a sailor as I am, and as trusty and kind a man as ever stepped. Do your duty by him, as you have done by me; and remember to the last, that while there is life there is hope. God bless and help you all!" With those words I collected what strength I had left, caught at two arms that were held out to me, and so got from the stern-sheets of one boat into the stern-sheets of the other.

"Mind [illegible] sir," [illegible] had helped [illegible] long-boat. I looked down [illegible] There [illegible] were [illegible] below me, with [illegible] falling [illegible] men [illegible] M[illegible] [illegible]

what I was doing,— knowing I loved him like a br seeing, I suppose, more distress in my face than ' conscious of its showing, lost command over the gether, and burst into a piteous moaning, sobbing over him. One of the two drew aside a jacket fi and showed me that they were bare, except where strip of stocking still clung to one of them. W struck the Iceberg, he had run on deck, leaving hi cabin. All through the voyage in the boat his feet d unprotected; and not a soul had discovered it until he dr As long as he could keep his eyes open, the very look o had cheered the men, and comforted and upheld the Not one living creature in the boat, with any sense abo but had felt the good influence of that brave man in one w another. Not one but had heard him, over and over give the credit to others which was due only to himself; prais-ing this man for patience, and thanking that man for help when the patience and the help had really and truly, as to the bes part of both, come only from him. All this, and much more, heard pouring confusedly from the men's lips while they crouched down, sobbing and crying over their commander, and wrapping the jacket as warmly and tenderly as they could over his cold feet. It went to my heart to check them; but I knew that, if this lamenting spirit spread any further, all chance of keeping alight any last sparks of hope and resolution among the boat's company would be lost for ever. Accordingly, I sent them to their places, spoke a few encouraging words to the men forward, promising to serve out, when the morning came, as much as I dared of any eatable thing left in the lockers; called to Rames, in my old boat, to keep as near us as he safely could; drew the garments and coverings of the two poor suffering women more closely about them; and with a secret prayer to be directed for the best in bearing the awful responsibility now laid on my shoulders, took my captain's vacant place at the helm of the long-boat.

This, as well as I can tell it, is the full and true account of how I came to be placed in charge of the lost passengers and crew of the Golden Mary, on the morning of the twenty-seventh day after the ship struck the Iceberg, and foundered at sea.

[redacted]

THE PERILS OF CERTAIN ENGLISH PRISONERS

CHAPTER I

THE ISLAND OF SILVER-STORE

It was in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty-four that I, Gill Davis to command, His Mark, having then the honour to be a private in the Royal Marines, stood a leaning over the bulwarks of the armed sloop Christopher Columbus, in the South American waters off the Mosquito shore.

My lady remarks to me, before I go any further, that there is no such Christian name as Gill, and that her confident opinion is that the name given to me in the baptism wherein I was made, etc., was Gilbert. She is certain to be right, but I never heard of it. I was a foundling child, picked up somewhere or another, and I always understood my Christian name to be Gill. It is true that I was called Gills when employed at Snorridge Bottom betwixt Chatham and Maidstone to frighten birds, but that had nothing to do with the baptism wherein I was made, etc., and wherein a number of things were promised for me by somebody, who let me alone ever afterwards as to performing any of them, and who, I consider, must have been the Beadle. Such name of Gills was entirely owing to my cheeks, or gills, which at that time of my life were of a raspy description.

My lady stops me again, before I go any further, by laughing exactly in her old way and waving the feather of her pen at me. That action on her part calls to my mind as I look at her hand with the rings on it — Well! I won't! To be sure it will come in, in its own place. But it's always strange to me, noticing the quiet hand, and noticing it (as I have done, you know, so many times) a fondling children and grandchildren asleep, to think that when blood and honour were up — there! I won't! not at present! — Scratch it out.

She won't scratch it out, and quite honourable; because we

have made an understanding that everything is to be taken down, and that nothing that is once taken down shall be scratched out. I have the great misfortune not to be able to read and write, and I am speaking my true and faithful account of those Adventures, and my lady is writing it, word for word.

I say, there I was, a leaning over the bulwarks of the sloop Christopher Columbus in the South American waters off the Mosquito shore, a subject of his Gracious Majesty King George of England, and a private in the Royal Marines.

In those climates you don't want to do much. I was doing nothing. I was thinking of the shepherd (my father, I wonder?) on the hillsides by Snorridge Bottom, with a long staff, and with a rough white coat in all weathers all the year round, who used to let me lie in a corner of his hut by night, and who used to let me go about with him and his sheep by day when I could get nothing else to do, and who used to give me so little of his victuals and so much of his staff that I ran away from him — which was what he wanted all along, I expect — to be knocked about the world in preference to Snorridge Bottom. I had been knocked about the world for nine-and-twenty years in all, when I stood looking along those bright blue South American waters. Looking after the shepherd, I may say. Watching him in a half-waking dream, with my eyes half shut, as he, and his flock of sheep, and his two dogs, seemed to move away from the ship's side, far away over the blue water, and go right down into the sky.

"It's rising out of the water, steady," a voice said close to me. I had been thinking on so that it like woke me with a start, though it was no stranger voice than the voice of Harry Charker, my own comrade.

"What's rising out of the water, steady?" I asked my comrade.

"What?" says he. "The Island."

"Oh! The Island!" says I, turning my eyes towards it. "True. I forgot the Island."

"Forgot the port you're going to? That's odd, ain't it?"

"It is odd," says I.

"And odd," he said, slowly considering with himself, "ain't even. Is it, Gill?"

He had always a remark just like that to make, and seldom another. As soon as he had brought a thing round to what it

was not, he was satisfied. He was one of the best of men, and, in a certain sort of a way, one with the least to say for himself. I qualify it, because, besides being able to read and write like a Quartermaster, he had always one most excellent idea in his mind. That was, Duty. Upon my soul, I don't believe, though I admire learning beyond everything, that he could have got a better idea out of all the books in the world, if he had learnt them every word, and been the cleverest of scholars.

My comrade and I had been quartered in Jamaica, and from there we had been drafted off to the British settlement of Belize, lying away West and North of the Mosquito coast. At Belize there had been great alarm of one cruel gang of pirates (there were always more pirates than enough in those Caribbean Seas), and as they got the better of our English cruisers by running into out-of-the-way creeks and shallows, and taking the land when they were hotly pressed, the governor of Belize had received orders from home to keep a sharp look-out for them along shore. Now there was an armed sloop came once a year from Port Royal, Jamaica, to the Island, laden with all manner of necessaries, to eat and to drink, and to wear, and to use in various ways; and it was aboard of that sloop, which had touched at Belize, that I was a standing, leaning over the bulwarks.

The Island was occupied by a very small English colony. It had been given the name of Silver-Store. The reason of its being so called was that the English colony owned and worked a silver mine over on the mainland, in Honduras, and used this Island as a safe and convenient place to store their silver in, until it was annually fetched away by the sloop. It was brought down from the mine to the coast on the backs of mules, attended by friendly Indians and guarded by white men; from thence it was conveyed over to Silver-Store, when the weather was fair, in the canoes of that country; from Silver-Store it was carried to Jamaica by the armed sloop once a year, as I have already mentioned; from Jamaica, it went, of course, all over the world.

How I came to be aboard the armed sloop is easily told. Four-and-twenty marines under command of a lieutenant — that officer's name was Linderwood — had been told off at Belize, to proceed to Silver-Store, in aid of boats and seamen stationed there for the chase of the pirates. The Island was

considered a good post of observation against the by land and sea; neither the pirate ship nor yet he been seen by any of us, but they had been so muc that the reinforcement was sent. Of that party, I was included a corporal and a sergeant. Charker was cor the sergeant's name was Drooce. He was the most non-commissioned officer in his Majesty's service.

The night came on, soon after I had had the forego with Charker. All the wonderful bright colours went out the sea and sky in a few minutes, and all the stars in heavens seemed to shine out together, and to look d themselves in the sea, over one another's shoulders, deep. Next morning, we cast anchor off the Island. was a snug harbour within a little reef; there was a s beach; there were cocoanut-trees with high, straight stems quite bare, and foliage at the top like plumes of magnificent green feathers; there were all the objects that are usually s in those parts, and I am not going to describe them, ha something else to tell about.

Great rejoicings, to be sure, were made on our arrival. All the flags in the place were hoisted, all the guns in the place were fired, and all the people in the place came down to look at us. One of those Sambo fellows — they call those natives Sambos, when they are half negro and half Indian — had come off outside the reef, to pilot us in, and remained on board after we had let go our anchor. He was called Christian George King, and was fonder of all hands than anybody else was. Now I confess, for myself, that on that first day, if I had been captain of the Christopher Columbus, instead of private in the Royal Marines, I should have kicked Christian George King — who was no more a Christian than he was a King or a George — over the side, without exactly knowing why, except that it was the right thing to do.

But I must likewise confess that I was not in a particularly pleasant humour, when I stood under arms that morning, aboard the Christopher Columbus in the harbour of the Island of Silver-Store. I had had a hard life, and the life of the English on the Island seemed too easy and too gay to please me. "Here you are," I thought to myself, "good scholars and good livers; able to read what you like, able to write what you like, able to eat and drink what you like, and spend what you like, and do what

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drink what you like, and spend what you like, and do what

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you like; and much *you* care for a poor, ignorant private in the Royal Marines!" Yet it's hard, too, I think, that you should have all the halfpence, and I all the kicks; you all the smiles, and I all the rough; you all the oil, and I all the vinegar." It was as envious a thing to think as might be, let alone its being nonsensical; but I thought it. I took it so much amiss that, when a very beautiful young English lady came aboard, I grunted to myself, "Ah! *you* have got a lover, I'll be bound!" As if there was any new offence to me in that, if she had!

She was sister to the captain of our sloop, who had been in a poor way for some time, and who was so ill then that he was obliged to be carried ashore. She was the child of a military officer, and had come out there with her sister, who was married to one of the owners of the silver mine, and who had three children with her. It was easy to see that she was the light and spirit of the Island. After I had got a good look at her, I grunted to myself again, in an even worse state of mind than before, "I'll be damned if I don't hate him, whoever he is!"

My officer, Lieutenant Linderwood, was as ill as the captain of the sloop, and was carried ashore, too. [illegible]

ing, with a sort of pleasure-ground inside, and inside that again a sunken block like a powder magazine, with a little square trench round it, and steps down to the door. Charker and I were looking in at the gate, which was not guarded; and I had said to Charker, in reference to the bit like a powder magazine, "That 's where they keep the silver, you see;" and Charker had said to me, after thinking it over, "And silver ain't gold. Is it, Gill?" when the beautiful young English lady I had been so bilious about looked out of a door, or a window — at all events looked out from under a bright awning. She no sooner saw us two in uniform than she came out so quickly that she was still putting on her broad Mexican hat of plaited straw when we saluted.

"Would you like to come in," she said, "and see the place? It is rather a curious place."

We thanked the young lady, and said we did n't wish to be troublesome; but she said it could be no trouble to an English soldier's daughter to show English soldiers how their countrymen and countrywomen fared, so far away from England; and consequently we saluted again, and went in. Then as we stood in the shade, she showed us (being as affable as beautiful) how the different families lived in their separate houses, and how there was a general house for stores, and a general reading-room, and a general room for music and dancing, and a room for Church; and how there were other houses on the rising ground called the Signal Hill, where they lived in the hotter weather.

"Your officer has been carried up there," she said, "and my brother, too, for the better air. At present, our few residents are dispersed over both spots; deducting, that is to say, such of our number as are always going to, or coming from, or staying at, the Mine."

("*He* is among one of those parties," I thought, "and I wish somebody would knock his head off.")

"Some of our married ladies live here," she said, "during at least half the year, as lonely as widows, with their children."

"Many children here, ma'am?"

"Seventeen. There are thirteen married ladies, and there are eight like me."

There were not eight like her — there was not one like her — in the world. She meant single.

"Which, with about thirty Englishmen of various degrees,"

"Yup, So-Jeer!" says he. "Bad job."

"What do you mean?" says I.

"Yup, So-Jeer," says he. "Ship Leakee."

"Ship leaky?" says I.

"Iss," says he, with a nod that looked as if it was jerked out of him by a most violent hiccup — which is the way with those savages.

I cast my eyes at Charker, and we both heard the pumps going aboard the sloop, and saw the signal run up, "Come on board; hands wanted from the shore." In no time some of the sloop's liberty-men were already running down to the water's edge, and the party of seamen, under orders against the pirates, were putting off to the Columbus in two boats.

"Oh, Christian George King sar berry sorry!" says that Sambo vagabond then. "Christian George King cry, English fashion!" His English fashion of crying was to screw his black knuckles into his eyes, howl like a dog, and roll himself on his back on the sand. It was trying not to kick him, but I gave Charker the word, "Double-quick, Harry!" and we got down to the water's edge, and got on board the sloop.

By some means or other, she had sprung such a leak, that no pumping would keep her free; and what between the two fears that she would go down in the harbour, and that, even if she did not, all the supplies she had brought for the little colony would be destroyed by the sea-water as it rose in her, there was great confusion. In the midst of it, Captain Maryon was heard hailing from the beach. He had been carried down in his hammock, and looked very bad; but he insisted on being stood there on his feet; and I saw him, myself, come off in the boat, sitting upright in the stern-sheets, as if nothing was wrong with him.

A quick sort of council was held, and Captain Maryon soon resolved that we must all fall to work to get the cargo out, and that when that was done, the guns and heavy matters must be got out, and that the sloop must be hauled ashore, and careened, and the leak stopped. We were all mustered (the pirate-chase party volunteering), and told off into parties, with so many hours of spell and so many hours of relief, and we all went at it with a will. Christian George King was entered one of the party in which I worked, at his own request, and he went at it with as good a will as any of the rest. He went at it with so much heartiness, to say the truth, that he rose in my good opinion

Tott. Being the kind of neat little woman it w make a toy of, — I never saw a woman so like a to — she had got the plaything name of Belltott. I had no other name on the Island. Even Mr. Com Pordage (and *he* was a grave one!) formally addres Mrs. Belltott. But I shall come to Mr. Commission presently.

The name of the captain of the sloop was Captain Mar and therefore it was no news to hear, from Mrs. Belltott his sister, the beautiful unmarried young English lady, w Maryon. The novelty was, that her Christian name was too. Marion Maryon. Ma [illegible] e run off those names in my thoughts, lik a [illegible] of verse. Oh, man many, and many a time!

We saw out all the drink that was produced, like good m and true, and then took our leaves, and went down to the bea The weather was beautiful, the wind steady, low, and gent the Island, a picture; the sea, a picture; the sky, a pictu In that country there are two rainy seasons in the year. O sets in at about our English Midsummer; the other, about a fortnight after our English Michaelmas. It was the beginning of August at that time; the first of these rainy seasons was well over; and everything was in its most beautiful growth, and had its loveliest look upon it.

"They enjoy themselves here," I says to Charker, turning surly again. "This is better than private soldiering."

We had come down to the beach, to be friendly with the boat's crew who were camped and hutted there; and we were approaching towards their quarters over the sand, when Christian George King comes up from the landing-place at a wolf's trot, crying, "Yup, So-Jeer!" — which was that Sambo Pilot's barbarous way of saying, Hallo, Soldier! I have stated myself to be a man of no learning, and, if I entertain prejudices, I hope allowance may be made. I will now confess to one. It may be a right one or it may be a wrong one; but I never did like Natives, except in the form of oysters.

So when Christian George King, who was individually unpleasant to me besides, comes a trotting along the sand, clucking "Yup, So-Jeer!" I had a thundering good mind to let fly at him with my right. I certainly should have done it, but that it would have exposed me to reprimand.

[redacted]

[redacted]

TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

almost as fast as the water rose in the ship. Which was fast enough, and faster.

Mr. Commissioner Pordage kept in a red and black japanned box, like a family lump-sugar box, some document or other, which some Sambo chief or other had got drunk and spilt some ink over (as well as I could understand the matter), and by that means had given up lawful possession of the Island. Through having hold of this box, Mr. Pordage got his title of Commissioner. He was styled Consul too, and spoke of himself as "Government."

He was a stiff-jointed, high-nosed old gentleman, without an ounce of fat on him, of a very angry temper and a very yellow complexion. Mrs. Commissioner Pordage, making allowance for difference of sex, was much the same. Mr. Kitten, a small, youngish, bald, botanical and mineralogical gentleman, also connected with the mine, — but everybody there was that, more or less, — was sometimes called by Mr. Commissioner Pordage his Vice-Commissioner, and sometimes his Deputy-Consul. Or sometimes he spoke of Mr. Kitten, merely as being "under Government."

The beach was beginning to be a lively scene with the preparations for careening the sloop, and with cargo, and spars, and rigging, and water-casks, dotted about it, and with temporary quarters for the men rising up there out of such sails and odds and ends as could be best set on one side to make them, when Mr. Commissioner Pordage comes down in a high fluster, and asks for Captain Maryon. The captain, ill as he was, was slung in his hammock betwixt two trees, that he might direct; and he raised his head, and answered for himself.

"Captain Maryon," cries Mr. Commissioner Pordage, "this is not official. This is not regular."

"Sir," says the captain, "it hath been arranged with the clerk and supercargo that you should be communicated with, and requested to render any little assistance that may lie in your power. I am quite certain that hath been duly done."

"Captain Maryon," replies Mr. Commissioner Pordage, "there hath been no written correspondence. No documents have passed, no memoranda have been made, no minutes have been made, no entries and counter-entries appear in the official muniments. This is indecent. I call upon you, sir, to desist until all is regular, or Government will take this up."

"Sir," says Captain Maryon, chafing a little, as he looked out of his hammock, "between the chances of Government taking this up and my ship taking herself down, I much prefer to trust myself to the former."

"You do, sir?" cries Mr. Commissioner Pordage.

"I do, sir," says Captain Maryon, lying down again.

"Then, Mr. Kitten," says the Commissioner, "send up instantly for my Diplomatic coat."

He was dressed in a linen suit at that moment; but Mr. Kitten started off himself and brought down the Diplomatic coat, which was a blue cloth one, gold laced, and with a crown on the button.

"Now, Mr. Kitten," says Pordage, "I instruct you, as Vice-Commissioner and Deputy-Consul of this place, to demand of Captain Maryon, of the sloop Christopher Columbus, whether he drives me to the act of putting this coat on?"

"Mr. Pordage," says Captain Maryon, looking out of his hammock again, "as I can hear what you say, I can answer it without troubling the gentleman. I should be sorry that you should be at the pains of putting on too hot a coat on my account; but, otherwise, you may put it on hind-side before, or inside out, or with your legs in the sleeves, or your head in the skirts, for any objection that I have to offer to your thoroughly pleasing yourself."

"Very good, Captain Maryon," says Pordage, in a tremendous passion. "Very good, sir. Be the consequences on your own head! Mr. Kitten, as it has come to this, help me on with it."

When he had given that order, he walked off in the coat, and all our names were taken, and I was afterwards told that Mr. Kitten wrote from his dictation more than a bushel of large paper on the subject, which cost more before it was done with than ever could be calculated, and which only got done with, after all, by being lost.

Our work went on merrily, nevertheless, and the Christopher Columbus, hauled up, lay helpless on her side like a great fish out of water. While she was in that state, there was a feast, or a ball, or an entertainment, or more properly all three together, given us in honour of the ship, and the ship's company, and the other visitors. At that assembly, I believe, I saw all the inhabitants then upon the Island, without any exception. I

took no particular notice of more than a few, b[ut] very agreeable in that little corner of the world to[…] dren, who were of all ages, and mostly very prett[y …] mostly are. There was one handsome elderly lad[y …] dark eyes and grey hair, that I inquired about, […] that her name was Mrs. Venning; and her married [d…] fair slight thing, was pointed out to me by the name […] Fisher. Quite a child she looked, with a little co[…] holding to her dress; and her husband, just com[…] the mine, exceeding proud of her. They were a good-lo[oking] set of people on the whole, but I did n't like them. I wa[s out] of sorts; in conversation with Charker, I found fault with [all] of them. I said of Mrs. Venning, she was proud; of [Mrs.] Fisher, she was a delicate little baby-fool. What did I [think] of this one? Why, he was a fine gentleman. What did [I] say to that one? Why, she was a fine lady. What could you expect them to be (I asked Charker), nursed in that climat[e], with the tropical night shining for them, musical instrumen[ts] playing to them, great trees bending over them, soft la[mps] lighting them, fire-flies sparkling in among them, bright flow[ers] and birds brought into existence to please their eyes, delicious drinks to be had for the pouring out, delicious fruits to be got for the picking, and every one dancing and murmuring happily in the scented air, with the sea breaking low on the reef for a pleasant chorus.

"Fine gentlemen and fine ladies, Harry?" I says to Charker. "Yes, I think so! Dolls! Dolls! Not the sort of stuff for wear, that comes of poor private soldiering in the Royal Marines!"

However, I could not gainsay that they were very hospitable people, and that they treated us [illegible] well. Every man of us was at the entertainment, and Mrs. [illegible] had more partners than she [illegible] all night [illegible]. As to Jack [illegible] [illegible]

"here are two friends of mine!" He says, "Indeed? These two marines?" meaning Charker and self. "Yes," says she; "I showed these two friends of mine, when they first came, all the wonders of Silver-Store." He gave us a laughing look, and says he, "You are in luck, men. I would be [illegible] rated and go before the mast to-morrow, to be shown the way upward again by such a guide. You are in luck, men." When we had saluted, and he and the young lady had waltzed away, I said, "You are a pretty fellow, too, to talk of luck. You may go to the Devil!"

Mr. Commissioner Pordage and Mrs. Commissioner [illegible] among the company on that occasion like the King and Queen of a much Greater Britain than Great Britain. Only two other circumstances in that jovial night made much separate impression on me. One was this. A man in our draft of marines, named Tom Packer, a wild, unsteady young fellow, was the son of a respectable shipwright in Portsmouth Yard, [illegible]

[illegible]

found himself under of showing all the little colony, but especially the ladies and children, how fond he was of them, how devoted to them, and how faithful to them for life and death, for present, future, and everlasting, made a great impression on me. If ever a man, Sambo or no Sambo, was trustful and trusted, to what may be called quite an infantine and sweetly beautiful extent, surely, I thought that morning when I did at last lie down to rest, it was that Sambo Pilot, Christian George King.

This may account for my dreaming of him. He stuck in my sleep, cornerwise, and I could n't get him out. He was always flitting about me, dancing round me, and peeping in over my hammock, though I woke and dozed off again fifty times. At last, when I opened my eyes, there he really was, looking in at the open side of the little dark hut; which was made of leaves, and had Charker's hammock slung in it as well as mine.

"So-Jeer!" says he, in a sort of a low croak. "Yup!"

"Hallo!" says I, starting up. "What! You *are* there, are you?"

"Iss," says he. "Christian George King got news."

"What news has he got?"

"Pirates out!"

I was on my feet in a second. So was Charker. We were both aware that Captain Carton, in command of the boats, constantly watched the mainland for a secret signal, though, of course, it was not known to such as us what the signal was.

Christian George King had vanished before we touched the ground. But the word was already passing from hut to hut to turn out quietly, and we knew that the nimble barbarian had got hold of the truth, or something near it.

In a space among the trees behind the encampment of us visitors, naval and military, was a snugly screened spot, where we kept the stores that were in use, and did our cookery. The word was passed to assemble here. It was very quickly given, and was given (so far as we were concerned) by Sergeant Drooce, who was as good in a soldier point of view as he was bad in a tyrannical one. We were ordered to drop into this space, quietly, behind the trees, one by one. As we assembled here, the seamen assembled, too. Within ten minutes, as I should estimate, we were all here, except the usual guard upon the beach. The beach (we could see it through the wood) looked as it always had done in the hottest time of the day. The

guard were in the shadow of the sloop's hull, and [illegible] moving but the sea, and that moved very faintly. W[illegible] always been knocked off at that hour, until the sun grew [illegible] fierce, and the sea breeze rose, so that [illegible] us made no difference [illegible] then, in the look of the place. [illegible] I may mention that it was a holiday, and the [illegible] we had [illegible] since our hard work began. Last night's ball had been [illegible] on the leak's being repaired, and the careening [illegible]. The worst of the work was over, and to-morrow we were [illegible], to get the [illegible] afloat again.

We marines were now drawn up here, under arms. [illegible] chase party were drawn up separate. The men of the [illegible] were drawn up separate. The officers stepped out [illegible] midst of the three parties, and spoke so as all might hear. Captain Carton was the officer in command, and he had a [illegible] in his hand. His coxswain stood by him with a [illegible] glass, and with a slate on which he seemed to have been taking down orders.

[illegible]

ill I knew them to be) like St. George beating down the Dragon. Pain and weakness, want of ease and want of rest, had no more place in their minds than fear itself. Meaning now to express for my lady to write down exactly what I felt then and there, I felt this: "You two brave fellows that I have been so grudgeful of, I know that if you were dying you would put it off to get up and do your best, and then you would be so modest that in lying down again to die, you would hardly say, 'I did it!'"

It did me good. It really did me good.

But to go back to where I broke off. Says Captain Carton to Lieutenant Linderwood, "Sir, how will you divide your men? There is not room for all; and a few men should, in any case, be left here."

There was some debate about it. At last, it was resolved to leave eight marines and four seamen on the Island, besides the sloop's two boys. And because it was considered that the friendly Sambos would only want to be commanded in case of any danger (though none at all was apprehended there), the officers were in favour of leaving the two non-commissioned officers, Drooce and Charker. It was a heavy disappointment to them, just as my being one of the left was a heavy disappointment to me — then, but not soon afterwards. We men drew lots for it, and I drew "Island." So did Tom Packer. So, of course, did four more of our rank and file.

When this was settled, verbal instructions were given to all hands to keep the intended expedition secret, in order that the women and children might not be alarmed, or the expedition put in a difficulty by more volunteers. The assembly was to be on that same spot, at sunset. Every man was to keep up an appearance, meanwhile, of occupying himself in his usual way. That is to say, every man excepting [illegible] were appointed, with an [illegible] tion, and to muffle the [illegible] thing as trim and [illegible]

The Sambo Pilot had [illegible] his being wanted, and [illegible] hundred times over [illegible] King would stay with the [illegible] ladies and the [illegible] — [illegible] expression [illegible]

[redacted]

concerning the putting off of the boats, and in particular whether there was any way of embarking at the back of the Island, which Captain Carton would have half liked to do, and then have dropped round in its shadow and slanted across to the main. But, "No," says Christian George King. "No, no, no! Told you so, ten time. No, no, no! All reef, all rock, all swim, all drown!" Striking out as he said it, like a swimmer gone mad, and turning over on his back on dry land, and spluttering himself to death, in a manner that made him quite an exhibition.

The sun went down, after appearing to be a long time about it, and the assembly was called. Every man answered to his name, of course, and was at his post. It was not yet black dark, and the roll was only just gone through, when up comes Mr. Commissioner Pordage with his Diplomatic coat on.

"Captain Carton," says he, "sir, what is this?"

"This, Mr Commissioner" (he was very short with him) "is an expedition against the pirates. It is a secret expedition, so please to keep it a secret."

"Sir," says Commissioner Pordage, "I trust there is going to be no unnecessary cruelty committed?"

"Sir," returns the officer, "I trust not."

"That [illegible] sir," cries Commissioner Pordage, getting [illegible] "Captain Carton, I give you notice [illegible] with great delicacy [illegible] forbearance."

"Sir," [illegible] Captain Carton, "I am an English officer [illegible] Mr. [illegible] But I [illegible]

[illegible]

"[illegible] Pordage [illegible]

"[illegible] Mr. Pordage [illegible] with [illegible] swiftness [illegible] to exterminate [illegible]

le from the face of the earth. Let me recomme
ome, sir, and to keep out of the night air."
ever another syllable did that officer say to the
r, but turned away to his men. The Commissioner
Diplomatic coat to the chin, said, "Mr. Kitten, attend
ed, half choked himself, and took himself off.
now fell very dark indeed. I have seldom, if ever,
er, nor yet so dark. The moon was not due until
morning, and it was but a little after nine when ou
down where they were mustered. It was pretended
were to take a nap, but everybody knew that no nap
got under the circumstances. Though all were very
was a restlessness among the people; much what I
among the people on a race-course when the bell has
he saddling for a great race with large stakes on it.
t ten they put off; only one boat putting off at a time;
her following in five minutes; both then lying on their
until another followed. Ahead of all, paddling his own
ndish little canoe without a sound, went the Sambo
ke them safely outside the reef. No light was shown
, and that was in the commanding officer's own hand. I
ed the dark lantern for him, and he took it from me when
mbarked. They had blue-lights and such like with them,
kept themselves as dark as Murder.

he expedition got away with wonderful quietness, and
stian George King soon came back, dancing with joy.

Yup, So-Jeer," says he to myself in a very objectionable
of convulsions, "Christian George King sar berry glad.
tes all be blown a pieces. Yup! Yup!"

[y reply to that cannibal was, "However glad you may be,
your noise, and don't dance jigs and slap your knees about
or I can't abear to see you do it."

was on duty then; we twelve who were left being divided
four watches of three each, three hours' spell. I was re-
d at twelve. A little before that time, I had challenged,
Miss Maryon and Mrs. Belltott had come in.

Good Davis," says Miss Maryon, "what is the matter?
re is my brother?"

told her what was the matter, and where her brother was.

Oh, Heaven help him!" says she, clasping her hands and
ing up, — she was close in front of me, and she looked most

[redacted]

lovely to be sure; "he is not sufficiently recovered, not strong enough for such strife!"

"If you had seen him, miss," I told her, "as I saw him when he volunteered, you would have known that his spirit is strong enough for any strife. It will bear his body, miss, to wherever duty calls him. It will always bear him to an honourable life, or a brave death."

"Heaven bless you!" says she, touching my arm. "I know it. Heaven bless you!"

Mrs. Belltott surprised me by trembling and saying nothing. They were still standing looking towards the sea and listening, after the relief had come round. It continuing very dark, I asked to be allowed to take them back. Miss Maryon thanked me, and she put her arm in mine, and I did take them back. I have now got to make a confession that will appear singular. After I had left them, I laid myself down on my face on the beach, and cried for the first time since I had frightened birds as a boy at Snorridge Bottom, to think what a poor, ignorant, low-placed, private soldier I was.

It was only for half a minute or so. A man can't at all times be quite master of himself, and it was only for half a minute or so. Then I up and went to my hut, and turned into my hammock, and fell asleep with wet eyelashes, and a sore, sore heart. Just as I had often done when I was a child, and had been worse used than usual.

I slept (as a child under those circumstances might) very sound, and yet very sore at heart all through my sleep. I was awoke by the words, "He is a determined man." I had got out of my hammock, and had seized my firelock, and was standing on the ground, saying the words myself, "He is a determined man." But the curiosity of my state was, that I seemed to be repeating them after somebody, and to have been wonderfully startled by hearing them.

As soon as I came to myself, I went out of the hut, and away to where the guard was. Charker challenged: —

"Who goes there?"

"A friend."

"Not Gill?" says he, as he shouldered his piece.

"Gill," says I.

"Why, what the deuce do you do out of your hammock?" says he.

"Too hot for sleep," says I. "Is all right?"

"Right!" says Charker, "yes, yes; all 's right enough here; what should be wrong here? It 's the boats that we want to know of. Except for fire-flies twinkling about, and the lonesome splashes of great creatures as they drop into the water, there 's nothing going on here to ease a man's mind from the boats."

The moon was above the sea, and had risen, I should say, some half an hour. As Charker spoke, with his face towards the sea, I, looking landward, suddenly laid my right hand on his breast, and said, "Don't move. Don't turn. Don't raise your voice! You never saw a Maltese face here?"

"No. What do you mean?" he asks, staring at me.

"Nor yet an English face, with one eye and a patch across the nose?"

"No. What ails you? What do you mean?"

I had seen both, looking at us round the stem of a cocoanut-tree, where the moon struck them. I had seen that Sambo Pilot, with one hand laid on the stem of the tree, drawing them back into the heavy shadow. I had seen their naked cutlasses twinkle and shine, like bits of the moonshine in the water that had got blown ashore among the trees by the light wind. I had seen it all in a moment. And I saw in a moment (as any man would), that the signalled move of the pirates on the mainland was a plot and a feint; that the leak had been made to disable the sloop; that the boats had been tempted away, to leave the Island unprotected; that the pirates had landed by some secreted way at the back; and that Christian George King was a double-dyed traitor, and a most infernal villain.

I considered, still all in one and the same moment, that Charker was a brave man, but not quick with his head; and that Sergeant Drooce, with a much better head, was close by. All I said to Charker was, "I am afraid we are betrayed. Turn your back full to the moonlight on the sea, and cover the stem of the cocoanut-tree which will then be right before you, at the height of a man's heart. Are you right?"

"I am right," says Charker, turning instantly, and falling into the position with a nerve of iron; "and right ain't left. Is it, Gill?"

A few seconds brought me to Sergeant Drooce's hut. He was fast asleep, and being a heavy sleeper, I had to lay my

hand upon him to rouse him. The instant I touched him he came rolling out of his hammock, and upon me like a tiger. And a tiger he was, except that he knew what he was up to, in his utmost heat, as well as any man.

I had to struggle with him pretty hard to bring him to his senses, panting all the while (for he gave me a breather) "Sergeant, I am Gill Davis! Treachery! Pirates on the Island!"

The last words brought him round, and he took his hands off. "I have seen two of them within this minute," said I. And so I told him what I had told Harry Charker.

His soldierly, though tyrannical, head was clear in an instant. He didn't waste one word, even of surprise. "Order the guard," says he, "to draw off quietly into the Fort." [illegible] called the [illegible] I have before mentioned [illegible] it was not [illegible] of that [illegible] "Then get you to the Fort [illegible] as you can, rouse up every soul there, and [illegible] will bring [illegible] and those who [illegible] at the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] "W[illegible]"

[illegible]

[illegible]

Miss Ma[illegible] [illegible] Mrs. M[illegible] Mr. Macey, Mrs [illegible] Mr and Mrs Pordage [illegible] here, get up and defend [illegible] Pirates have landed. We [illegible]

[illegible] for those villains had [illegible] never can be told in writing, and can scarcely be so much as thought of — cries and screams

rose up from every part of the place. Quickly about from window to window, and the cries move them, and men, women, and children came flying dow square. I remarked to myself, even then, what a things I seemed to see at once. I noticed Mrs. Macey towards me, carrying all her three children together. I n Mr. Pordage, in the greatest terror, in vain trying to get Diplomatic coat; and Mr. Kitten respectfully tying his p handkerchief over Mrs. Pordage's nightcap. I noticed Belltott run out screaming and shrink upon the ground me, and cover her face in r hands, and lie, all of a bunc shivering. But what I noticed with the greatest pleasure the determined eyes with which those men of the Mine had thought fine gentlemen came round me with what they had; to the full as cool and resolute as I could be, for my life — ay, and for my soul, too, into the bargain!

The chief person being Mr. Macey, I told him how the thre men of the guard would be at the gate directly, if they we not already there, and how Sergeant Drooce and the other seven were gone to bring in the outlying part of the people of Silver-Store. I next urged him, for the love of all who were dear to him, to trust no Sambo, and, above all, if he could get any good chance at Christian George King, not to lose it, but to put him out of the world.

"I will follow your advice to the letter, Davis," says he. "What next?"

My answer was, "I think, sir, I would recommend you next to order down such heavy furniture and lumber as can be moved, and make a barricade within the gate."

"That 's good again," says he. "Will you see it done?"

"I 'll willingly help to do it," says I, "unless or until my superior, Sergeant Drooce, gives me other orders."

He shook me by the hand, and, having told off some of his companions to help me, bestirred himself to look to the arms and ammunition. A proper quick, brave, steady, ready gentleman!

One of their three little children was deaf and dumb. Miss Maryon had been from the first with all the children, soothing them, and dressing them (poor little things, they had been brought out of their beds), and making them believe that it was a game of pl w even

[redacted]

laughing. I had been working hard with the others at the barricade, and had got up a pretty good breastwork within the gate. Drooce and the seven had come back, bringing in the people from the Signal Hill, and had worked along with us; but I had not so much as spoken a word to Drooce, nor had Drooce so much as spoken a word to me, for we were both too busy. The breastwork was now finished, and I found Miss Maryon at my side, with a child in her arms. Her dark hair was fastened round her head with a band. She had a quantity of it, and it looked even richer and more precious, put out hastily out of her way, than I had seen it look when it was carefully arranged. She was very pale, but extraordinarily quiet and still.

"Dear good Davis," said she, "I have been waiting to speak one word to you."

I turned to her directly. If I had received a musket-ball in the heart, and she had stood there, I almost believe I [illegible] have turned to her before I dropped.

"This pretty little creature," said she, kissing the [illegible] her arms, who was playing with her hair and trying to [illegible] down, "[illegible] hear what we say [illegible] can hear nothing. I [illegible] you [illegible] and have such great confidence in you, [illegible] I want you to make me a promise."

"W[illegible]"

"[illegible] defeated, and you are absolutely sure [illegible] will kill me."

"I [illegible] time to do it, miss. I shall have [illegible] your defence before it comes to that. They must step over my [illegible]."

"But if you are alive, you brave soldier." How she [illegible] "[illegible] save me from the pirates, [illegible] you will [illegible] Tell me so."

Well! I [illegible] I would do that at the last, if all else failed. [illegible] rough, coarse hand — and [illegible] it to her [illegible] to the child's lips, and the child [illegible] I had the strength of half a dozen men in me, [illegible] until the fight was over.

All [illegible] Mr. Commissioner Pordage had been wanting to make [illegible] to the pirates to lay down their arms and [illegible] had been hustling him about and tumbling over him, while he was calling for pen and ink to write a

with. Mrs. Pordage, too, had some curious ideas about the British respectability of her nightcap (which had as many frills to it, growing in layers one inside another, as if it was a white vegetable of the artichoke sort); and she would n't take the nightcap off, and would be angry when it got crushed by the other ladies, who were handing things about, and, in short, she gave as much trouble as her husband did. But as we were now forming for the defence of the place, they were both poked out of the way with no ceremony. The children and ladies were got into the little trench which surrounded the silver-house (we were afraid of leaving them in any of the light buildings, lest they should be set on fire), and we made the best disposition we could. There was a pretty good store, in point of amount, of tolerable swords and cutlasses. Those were issued. There were, also, perhaps a score or so of spare muskets. Those were brought out. To my astonishment, little Mrs. Fisher, that I had taken for a doll and a baby, was not only very active in that service, but volunteered to load the spare arms.

"For I understand it well," says she cheerfully, without a shake in her voice.

"I am a soldier's daughter and a sailor's sister, and I understand it, too," says Miss Maryon, just in the same way.

Steady and busy behind where I stood, those two beautiful and delicate young women fell to handling the guns, hammering the flints, looking to the locks, and quietly directing others to pass up powder and bullets from hand to hand, as unflinching as the best of tried soldiers.

Sergeant Drooce had brought in word that the pirates were very strong in numbers — over a hundred was his estimate — and that they were not, even then, all landed; for he had seen them in a very good position on the farther side of the Signal Hill, evidently waiting for the rest of their men to come up. In the present pause, the first we had had since the alarm, he was telling this over again to Mr. Macey, when Mr. Macey suddenly cried out: "The signal! Nobody has thought of the signal!"

We knew of no signal, so we could not have thought of it.

"What signal may you mean, sir?" says Sergeant Drooce, looking sharp at him.

"There is a pile of wood upon the Signal Hill. If it could

[redacted]

be lighted — which never has been done yet — it would be a signal of distress to the mainland."

Charker cries directly: "Sergeant Drooce, despatch me on that duty. Give me the two men who were on guard with me to-night, and I'll light the fire, if it can be done."

"And if it can't, corporal —" Mr. Macey strikes in.

"Look at these ladies and children, sir!" says Charker. "I'd sooner *light myself* than not try any chance to save them."

We gave him a hurrah! — it burst from us, come of it what might — and he got his two men, and was let out at the gate, and crept away. I had no sooner come back to my place from being one of the party to handle the gate than Miss Maryon said in a low voice behind me: —

"Davis, will you look at this powder? This is not right!"

I turned my head. Christian George King again, and treachery again! Sea-water had been conveyed into the magazine, and every grain of powder was spoiled!

"Stay a moment," said Sergeant Drooce, when I [illegible] him, [illegible] "Look [illegible] You, Tom Packer, [illegible] Look [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] "H[illegible] your lodging, men. You are [illegible] far."

[illegible] far.

"W[illegible] gentlemen all," says the [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] D[illegible]," says the [illegible] "and [illegible] Lascars, men, [illegible]

We were not long about it, and we brought them take me," says Charker, holding me round the neck bling down at my feet when the gate was fast, "do near the ladies or the children, Gill. They had be Death till it can't be helped. They'll see it soon

"Harry!" I answered, holding up his head. "

He was cut to pieces. The signal had been secure first pirate party that landed; his hair was all si his face was blackened with the running pitch from

He made no complaint of pain, or of anything. "Good old chap," was all he said with a smile. "I've got my d And Death ain't life. Is it, Gill?"

Having helped to lay his poor body on one side, I went to my post. Sergeant Drooce looked at me, with his eyebrows a little lifted. I nodded. "Close up here, men, and gentlemen all!" said the sergeant. "A place too many in the line."

The pirates were so close upon us at this time that the foremost of them were already before the gate. More and more came up with a great noise, and shouting loudly. When we believed from the sound that they were all there, we gave three English cheers. The poor little children joined, and were so fully convinced of our being at play that they enjoyed the noise, and were heard clapping their hands in the silence that followed.

Our disposition was this, beginning with the rear. Mrs. Venning, holding her daughter's child in her arms, sat on the steps of the little square trench surrounding the silver-house, encouraging and directing those women and children as she might have done in the happiest and easiest time of her life. Then there was an armed line, under Mr. Macey, across the width of the inclosure, facing that way and having their backs towards the gate, in order that they might watch the walls and prevent our being taken by surprise. Then there was a space of eight or ten feet deep, in which the spare arms were, and in which Miss Maryon and Mrs. Fisher, their hands and dresses blackened with the spoilt gunpowder, worked on their knees, tying such things as knives, old bayonets, and spear-heads, to the muzzles of the useless muskets. Then there was a second armed line, under Sergeant Drooce, also across the width of the inclosure, but facing to the gate. Then came the breastwork we had made, with a zigzag way through it for me and my

[redacted]

little party to hold good in retreating as long as we could when we were driven from the gate. We all knew that it was impossible to hold the place long, and that our only hope was in the timely discovery of the plot by the boats, and in their coming back.

I and my men were now thrown forward to the gate. From a spy-hole, I could see the whole crowd of pirates. There were Malays among them, Dutch, Maltese, Greeks, Sambos, Negroes, and convict Englishmen from the West India Islands; among the last, him with the one eye and the patch across the nose. There were some Portuguese, too, and a few Spaniards. The captain was a Portuguese; a little man with very large earrings under a very broad hat, and a great bright shawl twisted about his shoulders. They were all strongly armed, but like a boarding party, with pikes, swords, cutlasses, and axes. I noticed a good many pistols, but not a gun of any kind among them. This gave me to understand that they had considered that a continued roll of musketry might perhaps have been heard at the mainland [illegible] from the [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

carried such a gate, if they had been unarmed. Sergeant Drooce at my side, forming us six remai in line — Tom Packer next to me — and orderii back three paces, and, as they broke in, to give t little volley at short distance. "Then," says them behind your breastwork on the bayonet, an every man of you pin one of the cursed cockchafer body."

We checked them by our fire, slight as it was, an he them at the breastwork. However, they broke swarms of devils, — they were. reallv and truly. than men, — and then it w indeed.

We clubbed our muskets s; even then two ladies — always behind — were steady and ready the arms. I had a lot of tese and Malays upon me, an but for a broadsword that Maryon's own hand put in mine, should have got my end from them. But was that all? No. I saw a heap of banded dark hair and a white dress come thrice between me and the , under my own raised right arm, which each time might have destroyed the wearer of the white dress; and each time one of the lot went down, struck dead.

Drooce was armed with a broadsword, too, and did such things with it that there was a cry, in half a dozen languages, of "Kill that sergeant!" as I knew, by the cry being raised in English, and taken up in other tongues. I had received a severe cut across the left arm a few moments before, and should have known nothing of it, except supposing that somebody had struck me a smart blow, if I had not felt weak, and seen myself covered with spouting blood, and, at the same instant of time, seen Miss Maryon tearing her dress, and binding it, with Mrs. Fisher's help, round the wound. They called to Tom Packer, who was scouring by, to stop and guard me for one minute, while I was bound, or I should bleed to death in trying to defend myself. Tom stopped directly, with a good sabre in his hand.

In that same moment — all things seem to happen in that same moment, at such a time — half a dozen had rushed howling at Sergeant Drooce. The sergeant, stepping back against the wall, stopped one howl for ever with such a terrible blow, and waited for the rest to come on with such a wonderfully unmoved face, that they stopped and looked at him.

[redacted]

"See him now!" cried Tom Packer. "Now, when I could cut him out! Gill! Did I tell you to mark my words?"

I implored Tom Packer in the Lord's name, as well as I could in my faintness, to go to the sergeant's aid.

"I hate and detest him," says Tom, moodily wavering. "Still, he is a brave man." Then he calls out, "Sergeant Drooce, sergeant Drooce! Tell me you have driven me too hard, and are sorry for it!"

The Sergeant, without turning his eyes from his assailants, which would have been instant death to him, answers: —

"No. I won't."

"Sergeant Drooce!" cries Tom, in a kind of an agony. "I have passed my word that I would never save you from Death, if I could, but would leave you to die. Tell me you have driven me too hard and are sorry for it, and that shall go for nothing."

One of the group laid the sergeant's bald, bare head open. The sergeant laid him dead.

"I tell you," says the sergeant, breathing a little short, and waiting for the next attack, "no. I won't. If you are not man enough to strike for a fellow-soldier because he wants help, and because of nothing else, I 'll go into the other world and look for a better man."

Tom swept upon them, and cut him out. Tom and he fought their way through another knot of them, and sent them flying, and came over to where I was beginning again to feel, with inexpressible joy, that I had got a sword in my hand.

They had hardly come to us, when I heard, above all the other noises, a tremendous cry of women's voices. I also saw Miss Maryon, with quite a new face, suddenly clap her two hands over Mrs. Fisher's eyes. I looked towards the silver-house, and saw Mrs. Venning — standing upright on the top of the steps of the trench, with her grey hair and her dark eyes — hide her daughter's child behind her, among the folds of her dress, strike a pirate with her other hand, and fall, shot by his pistol.

The cry arose again, and there was a terrible and confusing rush of the women into the midst of the struggle. In another moment, something came tumbling down upon me that I thought was the wall. It was a heap of Sambos who had come over the wall; and of four men who clung to my legs like

serpents, one who clung to my right leg was Christian George King.

"Yup, So-Jeer," says he, "Christian George King sar berry glad So-Jeer a prisoner. Christian George King been waiting for So-Jeer sech long time. Yup, yup!"

What could I do, with five-and-twenty of them on me, but be tied hand and foot? So I was tied hand and foot. It was all over now — boats not come back — all lost! When I was fast bound and was put up against the wall, the one-eyed English convict came up with the Portuguese captain to have a look at me.

"See!" says he. "Here's the determined man. If you had slept sounder last night, you'd have slept your soundest last night, my determined man."

The Portuguese captain laughed in a cool way, and, with the flat of his cutlass, hit me crosswise, as if I was the bough of a tree that he played with; first on the face, and then across the chest and the wounded arm. I looked him steady in the face without trembling while he looked at me, I am happy to say; but when they went away, I fell, and lay there.

The sun was up when I was roused and told to come down to the beach, and be embarked. I was full of aches and pains, and could not at first remember; but I remembered quite soon enough. The killed were lying about all over the place, and the pirates were burying their dead, and taking away their wounded on hastily made litters, to the back of the Island. As for us prisoners, some of their boats had come round to the usual harbour, to carry us off. We looked a wretched few, I thought, when I got down there; still it was another sign that we had fought well, and made the enemy suffer.

The Portuguese captain had all the women already embarked in the boat he himself commanded, which was just putting off when I got down. Miss Maryon sat on one side of him, and gave me a moment's look, as full of quiet courage, and pity, and confidence, as if it had been an hour long. On the other side of him was poor little Mrs. Fisher, weeping for her child and her mother. I was shoved into the same boat with Drooce and Packer, and the remainder of our party of marines; of whom we had lost two privates, besides Charker, my poor, brave comrade. We all made a melancholy passage, under the hot sun, over to the mainland. There we landed in a solitary place, and were

mustered on the sea-sand. Mr. and Mrs. Macey and their children were amongst us, Mr. and Mrs. Pordage, Mr Kitten, Mr Fisher, and Mrs. Belltott. We mustered only fourteen men, fifteen women, and seven children. Those were all that remained of the English who had lain down to sleep last night, unsuspecting and happy, on the Island of Silver-Store.[1]

CHAPTER III

THE RAFTS ON THE RIVER

We contrived to keep afloat all that night, and, the stream running strong with us, to glide a long way down the river. But we found the night to be a dangerous time for such navigation, on account of the eddies and rapids, and it was therefore settled next day that in future we would bring to at sunset, and encamp on the shore. As we knew of no boats that the pirates possessed, up at the Prison in the Woods, we [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[1] [illegible]

point-currents of the stream, made the likelihood of our being drowned, alone, — to say nothing of our being retaken, — as broad and plain as the sun at noonday to all of us. But we all worked hard at managing the rafts, under the direction of the seamen (of our own skill, I think we never could have prevented them from oversetting), and we also worked hard at making good the defects in their first hasty construction — which the water soon found out. While we humbly resigned ourselves to going down, if it was the will of Our Father that was in Heaven, we humbly made up our minds that we would all do the best that was in us.

And so we held on, gliding with the stream. It drove us to this bank, and it drove us to that bank, and it turned us, and whirled us; but yet it carried us on. Sometimes much too slowly; sometimes much too fast, but yet it carried us on.

My little deaf and dumb boy slumbered a good deal now, and that was the case with all the children. They caused very little trouble to any one. They seemed, in my eyes, to get more like one another, not only in quiet manner, but in the face, too. The motion of the raft was usually so much the same, the scene was usually so much the same, the sound of the soft wash and ripple of the water was usually so much the same, that they were made drowsy, as they might have been by the constant playing of one tune. Even on the grown people, who worked hard and felt anxiety, the same things produced something of the same effect. Every day was so like the other, that I soon lost count of the days myself, and had to ask Miss Maryon, for instance, whether this was the third or fourth? Miss Maryon had a pocket-book and pencil, and she kept the log; that is to say, she entered up a clear little journal of the time, and of the distances our seamen thought we had made, each night.

So, as I say, we kept afloat and glided on. All day long, and every day, the water, and the woods, and sky; all day long, and every day, the constant watching of both sides of the river, and far ahead at every bold turn and sweep it made, for any signs of pirate-boats or pirate-dwellings. So, as I say, we kept afloat and glided on. The days melting themselves together to that degree, that I could hardly believe my ears when I asked, "How many now, miss?" and she answered, "Seven."

To be sure, poor Mr. Pordage had, by about now, got his Diplomatic coat into such a state as never was seen. What

[redacted]

with the mud of the river, what with the water of the river, what with the sun, and the dews, and the tearing boughs, and the thickets, it hung about him in discoloured shreds like a mop. The sun had touched him a bit. He had taken to always polishing one particular button, which just held on to his left wrist, and to always calling for stationery. I suppose that man called for pens, ink, and paper, tape, and wax, upwards of one thousand times in four and twenty hours. He had an idea that we should never get out of that river unless we were written out of it in a formal Memorandum; and the more we laboured at navigating the rafts, the more he ordered us not to touch them at our peril, and the more he sat and roared for stationery.

Mrs. Pordage, similarly, persisted in wearing her nightcap. I doubt if any one but ourselves, who had seen the progress of that article of dress, could by this time have told what it was meant for. It had got so limp and ragged [illegible]

[illegible]

What with this noise on the part of Mr. Commissioner Pordage, and what with the cries of Sergeant Drooce on the raft astern (which were sometimes more than Tom Packer could silence), we often made our slow way down the river, anything but quietly. Yet, that it was of great importance that no ears should be able to hear us from the woods on the banks could not be doubted. We were looked for to a certainty, and we might be retaken at any moment. It was an anxious time; it was, indeed, indeed, an anxious time.

On the seventh night of our voyage on the rafts we made fast, as usual, on the opposite side of the river to that from which we had started, in as dark a place as we could pick out. Our little encampment was soon made, and supper was eaten, and the children fell asleep. The watch was set, and everything made orderly for the night. Such a starlight night, with such blue in the sky, and such black in the places of heavy shade on the banks of the great stream!

Those two ladies, Miss Maryon and Mrs. Fisher, had always kept near me since the night of the attack. Mr. Fisher, who was untiring in the work of our raft, had said to me: —

"My dear little childless wife has grown so attached to you, Davis, and you are such a gentle fellow, as well as such a determined one," — our party had adopted that last expression from the one-eyed English pirate, and I repeat what Mr. Fisher said only because he said it, — "that it takes a load off my mind to leave her in your charge."

I said to him, "Your lady is in far better charge than mine, sir, having Miss Maryon to take care of her; but you may rely upon it that I will guard them both — faithful and true."

Says he, "I do rely upon it, Davis, and I heartily wish all the silver on our old Island was yours."

That seventh starlight night, as I have said, we made our camp, and got our supper, and set our watch, and the children fell asleep. It was solemn and beautiful in those wild and solitary parts to see them, every night before they lay down, kneeling under the bright sky, saying their little prayers at women's laps. At that time we men all uncovered, and mostly kept at a distance. When the innocent creatures rose up, we murmured "Amen!" all together. For though we had not heard what they said, we knew it must be good for us.

At that time, too, as was only natural, those poor mothers in

our company whose children had been killed shed many t[...]
I thought the sight seemed to console them while it made t[...]
cry; but whether I was right or wrong in that, they wept [...]
much. On this seventh night Mrs. Fisher had cried for [...]
lost darling until she cried herself asleep. She was lying [...]
little couch of leaves and such like (I made the best little [...]
I could for them every night), and Miss Maryon had cov[...]
her, and sat by her holding her hand. The stars looked d[...]
upon them. As for me, I guarded them.

"Davis!" says Miss Maryon. (I am not going to say w[...]
a voice she had. I could n't if I tried.)

"I am here, miss."

"The river sounds as if it were swollen to-night."

"We all think, miss, that we are coming near the sea."

"Do you believe, now, we shall escape?"

"I do now, miss, really believe it." I had always said I
did; but I had in my own mind been doubtful.

"How glad you will be, my good Davis, to see Engla[...]
again!"

I have another confession to make that will appear singul[...]
When she said these words, something rose in my throat; a[...]
the stars I looked away at seemed to break into sparkles th[...]
fell down my face and burnt it.

"England is not much to me, miss, except as a name."

"Oh, so true an Englishman should not say that!—A[...]
you not well to-night, Davis?" Very kindly, and with
quick change.

"Quite well, miss."

"Are you sure? Your voice sounds altered in my hearin[...]

"No, miss, I am a stronger man than ever. But Englan[...]
nothing to me."

Miss Maryon sat silent for so long a while, that I belie[...]
she had done speaking to me for one time. However, she
not; for by and by she said, in a distinct clear tone:—

"No, good friend; you must not say that Englan[...]
nothing to you. It is to be much to you yet—everyth[...]
to you. You have to take back to England the good name
have earned here, and the gratitude and attachment and res[...]
you have won here; and you have to make some good Eng[...]
girl very happy and proud, by marrying her; and I shall
day see her, I hope, and make her happier and prouder [...]

by telling her what noble services her husband's were in South America, and what a noble friend he was to me there."

Though she spoke these kind words in a cheering manner, she spoke them compassionately. I said nothing. It will appear to be another strange confession, that I paced to and fro, within call, all that night, a most unhappy man, reproaching myself all the night long. "You are as ignorant as any man alive; you are as obscure as any man alive; you are as poor as any man alive; you are no better than the mud under your foot." That was the way in which I went on against myself until the morning.

With the day came the day's labour. What I should have done without the labour, I don't know. We were afloat again at the usual hour, and were again making our way down the river. It was broader, and clearer of obstructions than it had been, and it seemed to flow faster. This was one of Drooce's quiet days; Mr. Pordage, besides being sulky, had almost lost his voice; and we made good way, and with little noise.

There was always a seaman forward on the raft, keeping a bright look-out. Suddenly, in the full heat of the day, when the children were slumbering, and the very trees and reeds appeared to be slumbering, this man — it was Short — holds up his hand, and cries with great caution, "Avast! Voices ahead!"

We held on against the stream as soon as we could bring her up, and the other raft followed suit. At first, Mr. Macey, Mr. Fisher, and myself could hear nothing; though both the seamen aboard of us agreed that they could hear voices and oars. After a little pause, however, we united in thinking that we *could* hear the sound of voices and the dip of oars. But you can hear a long way in those countries, and there was a bend of the river before us, and nothing was to be seen except such waters and such banks as we were now in the eighth day (and might, for the matter of our feelings, have been in the eightieth) of having seen with anxious eyes.

It was soon decided to put a man ashore, who should creep through the wood, see what was coming, and warn the rafts. The rafts in the mean time to keep the middle of the stream. The man to be put ashore, and not to swim ashore, as the first thing could be more quickly done than the second. The raft

conveying him, to get back into mid-stream, and to [illegible] along with the other, as well as it could, until signalled [illegible] the man. In case of danger, the man to shift for himself [illegible] should be able to take him aboard again [illegible] the man.

We knew that the voices and oars must come up [illegible] against the stream, and our seamen knew, [illegible] stream, under which bank they would come. I was [illegible]. The raft got off well, and I broke into the [illegible].

Steaming hot it was, and a tearing place to get through [illegible] the better for me, since it was something [illegible] against and do. I cut off the bend of the river, at a great saving of space, came to the water's edge again, and [illegible] and waited. I could now hear the dip of the oars very distinctly; the voices had ceased.

The sound came on in a regular tune, and, as I lay [illegible] I fancied the tune [illegible] played to be, "Christian — George — King! Christian — George — King! Christian — George — King!" [illegible]

"Christian — George — King! Christian — George — King! Christian — George — King!" [illegible]

[illegible]

"Christian — George — King! Christian — George — King! Christian — George — King!" Here they were!

[illegible] of all nations, [illegible] little Portuguese monkey, [illegible] with the gash across his face, [illegible] head off!" The worst [illegible] to do the cruellest [illegible] that ever stained it. The howling, [illegible] and drunken crowd of devils [illegible] and by treachery." No. [illegible] good blue-jackets and [illegible] that I knew myself, and sailors that knew

our seamen! At the helm of the first boat, Captain Carton, eager and steady. At the helm of the second boat, Captain Maryon, brave and bold. At the helm of the third boat, an old seaman, with determination carved into his watchful face like the figure-head of a ship. Every man doubly and trebly armed from head to foot. Every man lying-to at his work, with a will that had all his heart and soul in it. Every man looking out for any trace of friend or enemy, and burning to be the first to do good or avenge evil. Every man with his face on fire when he saw me, his countryman, who had been taken prisoner, and hailed me with a cheer, as Captain Carton's boat ran in and took me on board.

I reported, "All escaped, sir! All well, all safe, all here!"

God bless me — and God bless them — what a cheer! It turned me weak, as I was passed on from hand to hand to the stern of the boat; every hand patting me, or grasping me in some way or other, in the moment of my going by.

"Hold up, my brave fellow," says Captain Carton, clapping me on the shoulder like a friend, and giving me a flask. "Put your lips to that, and they 'll be red again. Now, boys, give way!"

The banks flew by us as if the mightiest stream that ever ran was with us; and so it was, I am sure, meaning the stream to those men's ardour and spirit. The banks flew by us, and we came in sight of the rafts — the banks flew by us, and we came alongside of the rafts — the banks stopped; and there was a tumult of laughing and crying, and kissing and shaking of hands, and catching up of children and setting of them down again, and a wild hurry of thankfulness and joy that melted every one and softened all hearts.

I had taken notice, in Captain Carton's boat, that there was a curious and quite new sort of fitting on board. It was a kind of a little bower made of flowers, and it was set up behind the captain, and betwixt him and the rudder. Not only was this arbour, so to call it, neatly made of flowers, but it was ornamented in a singular way. Some of the men had taken the ribbons and buckles off their hats, and hung them among the flowers: others had made festoons and streamers of their handkerchiefs, and hung them there; others had intermixed such trifles as bits of glass and shining [illegible] of lockets and tobacco-boxes with the flowers; so [illegible] it was a

very bright and lovely afloat in the sunshine. But why there, or what for, I did not understand.

Now, as soon as the first bewilderment was over, Captain Carton gave the order to land for the present. But the boat of his, with two hands left in her, immediately put off again when the men were out of her, and kept off, some yards from the shore. As she floated there, with the two hands gently backing water to keep her from going down the stream, this pretty little ark or [illegible] attracted many eyes. None of the boats' crews, however, had anything to say about it, except that it was the captain's fancy.

The captain, with the women and children clustering round him, and the seamen of all ranks grouped outside them, [illegible] listening, [illegible] telling how the Expedition, deceived by [illegible] intelligence, had chased the light pirate boats all that first night, and had still followed in their wake next day [illegible] never [illegible] until many hours too late that the great body had [illegible] darkness when the [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

I [illegible] M[illegible] M[illegible] her arm [illegible] when he had [illegible]

"B[illegible]," said the captain gently, "[illegible] the [illegible]."

"And my child, Captain Carton, did you find my child, too? Does my darling rest with my mother?"

"No. Your pretty child sleeps," said the captain, "under a shade of flowers."

His voice shook; but there was something in it that struck all the hearers. At that moment there sprung from the arbour in his boat a little creature, clapping her hands and stretching out her arms, and crying, "Dear papa! Dear mamma! I am not killed. I am saved. I am coming to kiss you. Take me to them, take me to them, good, kind sailors!"

Nobody who saw that scene has ever forgotten it, I am sure, or ever will forget it. The child had kept quite still, where her brave grandmamma had put her (first whispering in her ear, "Whatever happens to me, do not stir, my dear!"), and had remained quiet until the fort was deserted; she had then crept out of the trench, and gone into her mother's house; and there, alone on the solitary Island, in her mother's room, and asleep on her mother's bed, the captain had found her. Nothing could induce her to be parted from him after he took her up in his arms, and he had brought her away with him, and the men had made the bower for her. To see those men now was a sight. The joy of the women was beautiful; the joy of those women who had lost their own children was quite sacred and divine; but the ecstasies of Captain Carton's boat's crew, when their pet was restored to her parents, were wonderful for the tenderness they showed in the midst of roughness. As the captain stood with the child in his arms, and the child's own little arms now clinging round his neck, now round her father's, now round her mother's, now round some one who pressed up to kiss her, the boat's crew shook hands with one another, waved their hats over their heads, laughed, sang, cried, danced — and all among themselves, without wanting to interfere with anybody — in a manner never to be represented. At last I saw the coxswain and another, two very hard-faced men, with grizzled heads, who had been the heartiest of the hearty all along, close with one another, get each of them the other's head under his arm, and pummel away at it with his fist as hard as he could, in his excess of joy.

When we had well rested and refreshed ourselves — and very glad we were to have some of the heartening things to eat and drink that had come up in the boats — we recommenced our

voyage down the river; rafts, and boats, and all. [illegible] myself, it was a very different kind of voyage, now, from [illegible] it had been, and I fell into my proper place and sta[illegible] my fellow-soldiers.

But when we halted for the night, I found that Mr. Marvon had spoken to Captain Carton concerning me. [illegible] captain came straight up to me, and says he, "My fellow, you have been Mr. Maryon's body-guard [illegible], you shall remain so. Nobody shall supersede you [illegible] the trust and pleasure of protecting that young lady." [illegible] has been, in the fittest words I could find, and [illegible] was placed on my old post of watching the place where [illegible] slept. More than once in the night, I saw Captain Carton [illegible] out into the air, and stroll about there, to see that all was [illegible]. I have now this other singular confession to make, that I saw him with a heavy heart. Yes; I saw him with a heavy, heavy heart.

In the daytime I had the [illegible]

[illegible]

the Mosquito coast, the joke had been made by one of our men, that we should see her gazetted Mrs. Tom Packer, *vice* Belltott exchanged.

When we reached the coast, we got native boats as substitutes for the rafts; and we rowed along under the land; and in that beautiful climate, and upon that beautiful water, the blooming days were like enchantment. Ah! They were running away, faster than any sea or river, and there was no tide to bring them back. We were coming very near the settlement where the people of Silver-Store were to be left, and from which we marines were under orders to return to Belize.

Captain Carton had, in the boat by him, a curious long-barrelled Spanish gun, and he had said to Miss Maryon one day that it was the best of guns, and had turned his head to me, and said: —

"Gill Davis, load her fresh with a couple of slugs, against a chance of showing how good she is."

So I had discharged the gun over the sea, and had loaded her, according to orders, and there it had lain at the captain's feet, convenient to the captain's hand.

The last day but one of our journey was an uncommonly hot day. We started very early; but there was no cool air on the sea as the day got on, and by noon the heat was really hard to bear, considering that there were women and children to bear it. Now we happened to open, just at that time, a very pleasant little cove or bay, where there was a deep shade from a great growth of trees. Now the captain, therefore, made the signal to the other boats to follow him in, and lie by awhile.

The men who were off duty went ashore, and lay down, but were ordered, for caution's sake, not to stray, and to keep within view. The others rested on their oars, and dozed. Awnings had been made, of one thing and another, in all the boats, and the passengers found it cooler to be under them in the shade, when there was room enough, than to be in the thick woods. So the passengers were all afloat, and mostly sleeping. I kept my post behind Miss Maryon, and she was on Captain Carton's right in the boat, and Mrs. Fisher sat on her right again. The captain had Mrs. Fisher's daughter on his knee. He and the two ladies were talking about the pirates, and were talking softly; partly because people do talk softly under such indolent circumstances, and partly because the little girl had gone off asleep.

I think I have before given it out for my lady to write down that Captain Carton had a fine bright eye of his own. All at once, he darted me a side look, as much as to say, "Steady — don't take on — I see something!" — and gave the child into her mother's arms. That eye of his was so easy to understand that I obeyed it by not so much as looking either to the right or to the left out of a corner of my own, or changing my attitude the least trifle. The captain went on talking in the same mild and easy way; but began — with his arms resting across his knees, and his head a little hanging forward, as if the heat were rather too much for him — began to play with the Spanish gun.

"They had laid their plans, you see," says the captain, taking up the Spanish gun across his knees, and looking, lazily, at the inlaying of the stock, "with a great deal of art; and the corrupt or blundering local authorities were so easily [illegible] he ran his left hand idly along the barrel, but I saw, with my breath held, that he covered the position of [illegible] with his right [illegible] that they [illegible] into the trap. But [illegible] In a flash the Spanish gun was at [illegible] and he fired!

All [illegible]

[illegible]

"[illegible]"

"[illegible]"

[illegible]

"[illegible]"

It was a quick change, well meant and well made, though it ended in disappointment. No pirates were there; no one but the spy was found. It was supposed that the pirates, unable to retake us, and expecting a great attack upon them to be the consequence of our escape, had made from the ruins in the forest, taken to their ship along with the treasure, and left the spy to pick up what intelligence he could. In the evening we went away, and he was left hanging to the tree, all alone, with the red sun making a kind of a dead sunset on his black face.

Next day we gained the settlement on the Mosquito coast for which we were bound. Having stayed there to refresh seven days, and having been much commended, and highly spoken of, and finely entertained, we marines stood under orders to march from the Town Gate (it was neither much of a town nor much of a gate) at five in the morning.

My officer had joined us before then. When we turned out at the gate, all the people were there; in the front of them all those who had been our fellow-prisoners, and all the seamen.

"Davis," says Lieutenant Linderwood. "Stand out, my friend!"

I stood out from the ranks, and Miss Maryon and Captain Carton came up to me.

"Dear Davis," says Miss Maryon, while the tears fell fast down her face, "your grateful friends, in most unwillingly taking leave of you, ask the favour that while you bear away with you their affectionate remembrance, which nothing can ever impair, you will also take this purse of money — far more valuable to you, we all know, for the deep attachment and thankfulness with which it is offered, than for its own contents, though we hope those may prove useful to you, too, in after life."

I got out in answer that I thankfully accepted the attachment and affection, but not the money. Captain Carton looked at me very attentively, and stepped back, and moved away. I made him my bow as he stepped back, to thank him for being so delicate.

"No, miss," said I, "I think it would break my heart to accept of money. But if you could condescend to give to a man so ignorant and common as myself any little thing you have worn — such as a bit of ribbon — "

She took a ring from her finger, and put it in my hand. And she rested her hand in mine, while she said these words:—

"The brave gentlemen of old—but not one of them was braver, or had a nobler nature than you—took such gifts from ladies, and did all their good actions for the givers' sakes. If you will do yours for mine, I shall think with pride that I [illegible] time to have some share in the life of a gallant and generous man."

For the second time in my life she kissed my hand. I made so bold, for the first time, as to kiss hers; and I tied the ring at my breast, and I fell back to my place.

Then the horse-litter went out at the gate with Sergeant Drooce in it, and the horse-litter went out at the gate with Mrs. Belltott in it, and Lieutenant Linderwood gave the word of command, "Quick march!" and, cheered and cried for, we went out at the gate too, marching along the level plain towards the serene blue sky, as if we were marching straight to Heaven.

When I have added here that the pirate [illegible]

[illegible]

I [illegible] in my heart, of course, [illegible]

be laid with me wherever I am laid. I am getting on in years now, though I am able and hearty. I was recommended for promotion, and everything was done to reward me that could be done; but my total want of all learning stood in my way, and I found myself so completely out of the road to it, that I could not conquer any learning, though I tried. I was long in the service, and I respected it, and was respected in it, and the service is dear to me at this present hour.

At this present hour, when I give this out to my lady to be written down, all my old pain has softened away, and I am as happy as a man can be, at this present fine old country house of Admiral Sir George Carton, Baronet. It was my Lady Carton who herself sought me out, over a great many miles of the wide world, and found me in Hospital wounded, and brought me here. It is my Lady Carton who writes down my words. My lady was Miss Maryon. And now that I conclude what I had to tell, I see my lady's honoured grey hair droop over her face, as she leans a little lower at her desk; and I fervently thank her for being so tender as I see she is towards the past pain and trouble of her poor, old, faithful, humble soldier.

[redacted]

A HOUSE TO LET

GOING INTO SOCIETY

At one period of its reverses the House fell into the occupation of a Showman. He was found registered as its occupier on the parish-books of the time when he rented the House, and there was therefore no need of any clue to his name. But he himself was less easy to be found; for he had led a wandering life, and settled people had lost sight of him, and people who plumed themselves on being respectable were shy of admitting that they had ever known anything of him. At last, among the marsh lands near the river's level, that lie about Deptford and the neighbouring market gardens, a Grizzled Personage in velveteen, with a face so cut up by varieties of weather that he looked as if he had been tattooed, was found smoking a pipe at the door of a wooden house on wheels. The wooden house was laid up in ordinary for the winter, near the mouth of a muddy creek; and everything near it, the foggy river, the misty marshes, and the steaming market gardens, smoked in company with the grizzled man. In the midst of this smoking party, the funnel-chimney of the wooden house on wheels was not remiss, but took its pipe with the rest in a companionable manner.

On being asked if it were he who had once rented the House to Let, Grizzled Velveteen looked surprised, and said yes. "Then his name was Magsman?" "That was it, Toby Magsman—which lawfully christened Robert; but called in the line, from a infant, Toby. There was nothing agin Toby Magsman, he believed? If there was suspicion of such—mention it!"

There was no suspicion of such, he might rest assured. But some inquiries were making about that House, and would he object to say why he left it?

"Not at all; why should he? He left it along of a Dwarf."

"Along of a Dwarf?"

Mr Magsman repeated, deliberately and emphatically, "Along of a Dwarf."

Might it be compatible with Mr. Magsman's incli convenience to enter, as a favour, into a few particula

Mr. Magsman entered into the following particular.

It was a long time ago, to begin with; afore lot deal more was done away with. Mr. Magsman w bout for a good pitch, and he see that house, and imself, "I'll have you, if you're to be had. If m ou, I'll have you."

The neighbours cut up rough, and made complaints; but Magsman don't know what they *would* have had. It w ovely thing. First of all, there was the canvas, represe he picter of the Giant, in Spa sh trunks and a ruff, who imself half the heighth of th house, and was run up wit ine and pulley to a pole on the roof, so that his Ed was coe with the parapet. Then there was the canvas, representin' he picter of the Albina lady, showin' her white 'air to the Army nd Navy in correct uniform. Then there was the canvas, epresentin' the picter of the Wild Indian a scalpin' a member f some foreign nation. Then there was the canvas, repreentin' the picter of a child of a British Planter, seized by two Boa Constrictors — not that *we* never had no child, nor no Contrictors neither. Similarly, there was the canvas, representin' he picter of the Wild Ass of the Prairies — not that *we* never ad no wild asses, nor would n't have had 'em at a gift. Last, here was the canvas, representin' the picter of the Dwarf, and ike him too (considerin'), with George the Fourth in such a tate of astonishment at him as his Majesty could n't with his tmost politeness and stoutness express. The front of the House was so covered with canvases, that there was n't a spark of daylight ever visible on that side. "MAGSMAN'S AMUSEMENTS," fifteen foot long by two foot high, ran over the front door and parlour winders. The passage was a Arbour of green baize and garden stuff. A barrel-organ performed there unceasing. And as to respectability, — if threepence ain't respectable, what is?

But the Dwarf is the principal article at present, and he was worth the money. He was wrote up as MAJOR TPSCHOFFKI, OF THE IMPERIAL BULGRADERIAN BRIGADE. Nobody could n't pronounce the name, and it never was intended anybody should. The public always turned it, as a regular rule, into Chopski. In the line he was called Chops; partly on that account, and

partly because his real name, if he ever had any real name, (which was very dubious), was Stakes.

He was a un-common small man, he really was. Certainly not so small as he was made out to be, but where *is* your Dwarf as is? He was a most uncommon small man, with a most uncommon large Ed; and what he had inside that Ed, nobody never knowed but himself; even supposin' himself to have ever took stock of it, which it would have been a stiff job for even him to do.

The kindest little man as never growed! Spirited, but not proud. When he travelled with the Spotted Baby — though he knowed himself to be a nat'ral Dwarf, and knowed the Baby's spots to be put upon him artificial, he nursed that Baby like a mother. You never heerd him give a ill name to a Giant. He *did* allow himself to break out into strong language respectin' the Fat Lady from Norfolk; but that was an affair of the 'art; and when a man's 'art has been trifled with by a lady, and the preference giv' to a Indian, he ain't master of his actions.

He was always in love, of course; every human nat'ral phenomenon is. And he was always in love with a large woman; *I* never knowed the Dwarf as could be got to love a small one. Which helps to keep 'em the Curiosities they are.

One sing'ler idea he had in that Ed of his, which must have meant something, or it wouldn't have been there. It was always his opinion that he was entitled to property. He never would put his name to anything. He had been taught to write by the young man without arms, who got his living with his toes (quite a writing master *he* was, and taught scores in his time), but Chops would have starved to death, afore he'd have gained a bit of bread by putting his hand to a paper. This is the more curious to bear in mind, because HE had no property, nor hope of property, except his house and a sarser. When I say his house, I mean the box, painted and got up outside like a reg'lar six-roomer, that he used to creep into, with a diamond ring (or quite as good to look at) on his forefinger, and ring a little bell out of what the Public believed to be the Drawing-room winder. And when I say a sarser, I mean a Chaney sarser in which he made a collection for himself at the end of every Entertainment. His cue for that he took from me: "Ladies and gentlemen, the little man will now walk three times round

the Cairawan, and retire behind the curtain." When he said anything important in private life, he mostly wound it up with this form of words, and they was generally the last thing he said to me at night afore he went to bed.

He had what I consider a fine mind — a poetic mind. His ideas respectin' his property never come upon him so strong as when he sat upon a barrel-organ and had the handle turned. Arter the wibration had run through him a little time, he would screech out, "Toby, I feel my property coming — grind away! I 'm counting my guineas by thousands, Toby — grind away! Toby, I shall be a man of fortun'! I feel the Mint a jingling in me, Toby, and I 'm swelling out into the Bank of England!" Such is the influence of music on a poetic mind. Not that he was partial to any other music but a barrel-organ; on the contrairy, hated it.

He had a kind of a everlasting grudge agin the Public; which is a thing you may notice in many phenomenons that get their living out of it. What riled him most in the nater of his occupation was, that it kep' him out of Society. He was continiwally sayin', "Toby, my ambition is, to go into Society. The curse of my position towards the Public is, that it keeps me hout of Society. This don't signify to a low beast of a Indian; he ain't formed for Society. This don't signify to a Spotted Baby; *he* ain't formed for Society. — I am."

Nobody never could make out what Chops done with his money. He had a good salary, down on the drum every Saturday as the day come round, besides having the run of his teeth — and he was a Woodpecker to eat — but all Dwarfs are. The sarser was a little income, bringing him in so many halfpence that he 'd carry 'em for a week together, tied up in a pocket-handkercher. And yet he never had money. And it could n't be the Fat Lady from Norfolk, as was once supposed; because it stands to reason that when you have a animosity towards a Indian, which makes you grind your teeth at him to his face, and which can hardly hold you from Goosing him audible when he 's going through his War-Dance — it stands to reason you would n't under them circumstances deprive yourself, to support that Indian in the lap of luxury.

Most unexpected, the mystery come out one day at Egham Races. The Public was shy of bein' pulled in, and Chops was ringin' his little bell out of his drawing-room winder, and was

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snarlin' to me over his shoulder as he kneeled down with [illegible] legs out at the back door — for he couldn't be shoved [illegible] house without kneeling down, and the premises wouldn't [illegible] modate his legs — was snarlin', "Here's a precious [illegible] you; why the Devil don't they tumble up?" when a man [illegible] the crowd holds up a carrier-pigeon, and cries out, "If [illegible] any person here as has got a ticket, the Lottery's just drawn, and the number as has come up for the great prize is [illegible] seven, forty two! Three, seven, forty-two!" I was [illegible] man to the Furies myself, for calling off the Public's atten[illegible] — for the Public will turn away, at any time, to look at a[illegible] thing in preference to the thing showed 'em; and if you [illegible] it, get 'em together for any individual purpose on the fa[ce of] the earth, and send only two people in late, and see [if the] whole company ain't far more interested in takin' part [illegible] notice of them two than of you — I say, I wasn't best [illegible] with the man for callin' out, and wasn't blessin' [illegible] own mind, when I [illegible] little [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

"Normandy, I 'm a goin' into Society. Will you go with me?"

Says Normandy, "Do I understand you, Mr. Chops, to hintimate that the 'ole of the expenses of that move will be borne by yourself?"

"Correct," says Mr. Chops. "And you shall have a Princely allowance too."

The Bonnet lifted Mr. Chops upon a chair, to shake hands with him, and replied in poetry, with his eyes seemingly full of tears: —

"My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea,
And I do not ask for more,
But I 'll Go; — along with thee."

They went into Society, in a chay and four greys with silk jackets. They took lodgings in Pall Mall, London, and they blazed away.

In consequence of a note that was brought to Bartlemy Fair in the autumn of next year by a servant, most wonderful got up in milk-white cords and tops, I cleaned myself and went to Pall Mall, one evenin' appinted. The gentlemen was at their wine arter dinner, and Mr. Chops's eyes was more fixed in that 'Ed of his than I thought good for him. There was three of 'em (in company, I mean), and I knowed the third well. When last met, he had on a white Roman shirt, and a bishop's mitre covered with leopard-skin, and played the clarionet all wrong, in a band at a Wild Beast Show.

This gent took on not to know me, and Mr. Chops said, "Gentlemen, this is a old friend of former days," and Normandy looked at me through a eye-glass, and said, "Magsman, glad to see you!" — which I 'll take my oath he wasn't. Mr. Chops, to git him convenient to the table, had his chair on a throne (much of the form of George the Fourth's in the canvass), but he hardly appeared to me to be King there in any other pint of view, for his two gentlemen ordered about like Emperors. They was all dressed like May-Day — gorgeous! — and as to Wine, they swam in all sorts.

I made the round of the bottles, first separate (to say I had done it), and then mixed 'em all together (to say I had done it), and then tried two of 'em as half-and-half, and then t' other two. Altogether, I passed a pleasant evenin', but with a tendency to

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feel muddled, until I considered it good manners to get up and say, "Mr. Chops, the best of friends must part, I thank you for the wariety of foreign drains you have stood so 'andsome, I looks towards you in red wine, and I takes my leave." Mr Chops replied, "If you'll just hitch me out of this over your right arm, Magsman, and carry me down stairs, I'll see you out." I said I could n't think of such a thing, but he would have it, so I lifted him off his throne. He smelt strong of Maideary, and I could n't help thinking as I carried him down that it was like carrying a large bottle full of wine, with a rayther ugly stopper, a good deal out of proportion.

When I set him on the door-mat in the hall, he kep' me close to him by holding on to my coat-collar, and he whispers. —

"I ain't 'appy, Magsman."

"What's on your mind, Mr. Chops?"

"They don't use me well. They ain't grateful to me. They puts me on the mantel-piece when I won't have in more Champagne-wine, and they locks me in the sideboard when I won't give up my property."

"Get rid of 'em, Mr. Chops."

"I can't. We're in Society together, and what would Society say?"

"Come out of Society!" says I.

"I can't. You don't know what you're talking about. When you have once gone into Society, you mustn't come out of it."

"Then if you'll excuse the freedom, Mr Chops," were my remark, shaking my head grave, "I think it's a pity you ever went in."

Mr. Chops shook that deep head of his to a surprising extent, and slapped it half a dozen times with his hand, and with more Wice than I thought were in him. Then, he says, "You're a good fellow, but you don't understand. Good night, go along. Magsman, the little man will now walk three times round the Cairawan, and retire behind the curtain." The last I see of him on that occasion was his tryin', on the extremest werge of insensibility, to climb up the stairs, one by one, with his hands and knees. They'd have been much too steep for him, if he had been sober; but he wouldn't be helped.

It wasn't long after that, that I read in the newspaper of Mr. Chops's being presented at court. It was printed, "It will be

recollected" — and I've noticed in my life, that it is sure to be printed that it *will* be recollected, whenever it won't — "that Mr. Chops is the individual of small stature, whose brilliant success in the last State Lottery attracted so much attention." Well, I says to myself, Such is Life! He has been and done it in earnest at last! He has astonished George the Fourth!

(On account of which, I had that canvas new-painted, him with a bag of money in his hand, a presentin' it to George the Fourth, and a lady in Ostrich Feathers fallin' in love with him in a bag-wig, sword, and buckles correct.)

I took the House as is the subject of present inquiries, — though not the honour of bein' acquainted, — and I run Magsman's Amusements in it thirteen months — sometimes one thing, sometimes another, sometimes nothing particular, but always all the canvases outside. One night, when we had played the last company out, which was a shy company, through its raining Heavens hard, I was takin' a pipe in the one pair back along with the young man with the toes, which I had taken on for a month (though he never drawed — except on paper), and I heard a kickin' at the street door. "Halloa!" I says to the young man, "what's up?" He rubs his eyebrows with his toes, and he says, "I can't imagine, Mr. Magsman," — which he never could imagine nothin', and was monotonous company.

The noise not leavin' off, I laid down my pipe, and I took up a candle, and I went down and opened the door. I looked out into the street; but nothin' could I see, and nothin' was I aware of, until I turned round quick, because some creetur run between my legs into the passage. There was Mr. Chops!

"Magsman," he says, "take me, on the old terms, and you've got me; if it's done, say done!"

I was all of a maze, but I said, "Done, sir."

"Done to your done, and double done!" says he. "Have you got a bit of supper in the house?"

Bearin' in mind them sparklin' warieties of foreign drains as we'd guzzled away at in Pall Mall, I was ashamed to offer him cold sassages and gin and water; but he took 'em both, and took 'em free; havin' a chair for his table, and sittin' down at it on a stool, like hold times. I, all of maze all the while.

It was arter he had made a clean sweep of the sassages (beef, and to the best of my calculations two pound and a quarter),

that the wisdom as was in that little man began to come out of him like prespiration.

"Magsman," he says, "look upon me! You see afore you One as has both gone into Society and come out."

"Oh! You *are* out of it, Mr. Chops? How did you get out, sir?"

"Sold out!" says he. You never saw the like of the wisdom as his Ed expressed, when he made use of them two words.

"My friend Magsman, I'll impart to you a discovery I've made. It's wallable; it's cost twelve thousand five hundred pound; it may do you good in life. The secret of this matter is, that it ain't so much that a person goes into Society, as that Society goes into a person."

Not exactly keeping up with his meanin', I shook my head, put on a deep look, and said, "You're right there, Mr. Chops."

"Magsman," he says, twitching me by the leg, "Society has gone into me, to the tune of every penny of my property."

I felt that I went pale, and though nat'rally a bold speaker, I [illegible]

[illegible]

mercenary outrages. Lay in Cashmeer shawls, buy bracelets, strew 'em and a lot of 'andsome fans and things about your rooms, let it be known that you give away like water to all as come to admire, and the Fat Ladies that don't exhibit for so much down upon the drum will come from all the pints of the compass to flock about you, whatever you are. They 'll drill holes in your 'art, Magsman, like a Cullender. And when you 've no more left to give, they 'll laugh at you to your face, and leave you to have your bones picked dry by Wulturs, like the dead Wild Ass of the Prairies that you deserve to be!" Here he giv' himself the most tremendious one of all, and dropped.

I thought he was gone. His Ed was so heavy, and he knocked it so hard, and he fell so stony, and the sassagerial disturbance in him must have been so immense, that I thought he was gone. But he soon come round with care, and he sat up on the floor, and he said to me, with wisdom coming out of his eyes, if ever it come: —

"Magsman! The most material difference between the two states of existence through which your un'appy friend has passed," — he reached out his poor little hand, and his tears dropped down on the mustachio which it was a credit to him to have done his best to grow, but it is not in mortals to command success, — "the difference is this. When I was out of Society, I was paid light for being seen. When I went into Society, I paid heavy for being seen. I prefer the former, even if I was n't forced upon it. Give me out through the trumpet, in the hold way, to-morrow."

After that he slid into the line again as easy as if he had been iled all over. But the organ was kep' from him, and no allusions was ever made, when a company was in, to his property. He got wiser every day; his views of Society and the Public was luminous, bewilderin', awful; and his Ed got bigger and bigger as his Wisdom expanded it.

He took well, and pulled 'em in most excellent for nine weeks. At the expiration of that period, when his Ed was a sight, he expressed one evenin', the last Company havin' been turned out, and the door shut, a wish to have a little music.

"Mr. Chops," I said (I never dropped the "Mr." with him; the world might do it, but not me), — "Mr. Chops, are you sure as you are in a state of mind and body to sit upon the organ?"

[redacted]

His answer was this: "Toby, when next met with on the tramp, I forgive her and the Indian. And I am."

It was with fear and trembling that I began to turn the handle, but he sat like a lamb. It will be my belief to my dying day, that I see his Ed expand as he sat; you may therefore judge how great his thoughts was. He sat out all the changes, and then he come off.

"Toby," he says, with a quiet smile, "the little man will now walk three times round the Cairawan, and retire behind the curtain."

When we called him in the morning, we found him gone into a much better Society than mine or Pall Mall's. I giv' Mr Chops as comfortable a funeral as lay in my power, followed myself as Chief, and had the George the Fourth canvass carried first, in the form of a banner. But the House was so dismal afterwards, that I giv' it up, and took to the Wan again.

"I [illegible]," said Jarber, [illegible]

"H[illegible]

"I [illegible]," said Jarber. "Y[illegible]

"I [illegible] Trottle [illegible]

"A[illegible] Jarber. "What does the man want [illegible]

"I [illegible] with great respect," protested Trottle, [illegible] Magsman was the last tenant who [illegible] House [illegible] — if I may be ex[illegible] for pointing out — that he [illegible] was not."

With those words, Trottle made a low bow, and quietly left the room.

There is no denying that Jarber, when we were left together, looked sadly discomposed. He had evidently forgotten to inquire about dates; and in spite of his magnificent talk about his series of discoveries, it was quite as plain that the two stories he had just read had really and truly exhausted his present stock. I thought myself bound, in common gratitude, to help him out of his embarrassment by a timely suggestion. So I proposed that he should come to tea again, on the next Monday evening, the thirteenth, and should make such inquiries, in the mean time, as might enable him to dispose triumphantly of Trottle's objection.

He gallantly kissed my hand, made a neat little speech of acknowledgment, and took his leave. For the rest of the week I would not encourage Trottle by allowing him to refer to the House at all. I suspected he was making his own inquiries about dates, but I put no questions to him.

On Monday evening, the thirteenth, that dear unfortunate Jarber came, punctual to the appointed time. He looked so terribly harassed that he was really quite a spectacle of feebleness and fatigue. I saw, at a glance, that the question of dates had gone against him, that Mr. Magsman had not been the last tenant of the House, and that the reason of its emptiness was still to seek.

"What I have gone through," said Jarber, "words are not eloquent enough to tell. Oh, Sophonisba, I have begun another series of discoveries! Accept the last two as stories laid on your shrine; and wait to blame me for leaving your curiosity unappeased, until you have heard Number Three."

Number Three looked like a very short manuscript, and I said as much. Jarber explained to me that we were to have some poetry this time. In the course of his investigations he had stepped into the circulating library, to seek for information on the one important subject. All the library people knew about the House was that a female relative of the last tenant, as they believed, had, just after that tenant left, sent a little manuscript poem to them which she described as referring to events that had actually passed in the House; and which she wanted the proprietor of the library to publish. She had written no address on her letter; and the proprietor had kept

the manuscript ready to be given back to her (the publishi poems not being in his line) when she might call for it. had never called for it; and the poem had been lent to Ja at his express request, to read to me.

Before he began, I rang the bell for Trottle; being mined to have him present at the new reading, as a whol check on his obstinacy. To my surprise, Peggy answere bell, and told me that Trottle had stepped out without where. I instantly felt the strongest possible convictio he was at his old tricks; and that his stepping out i evening, without leave, meant — Philandering.

Controlling myself on my visitor's account, I dis Peggy, stifled my indignation, and prepared, as politely as be, to listen to Jarber.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE[1]

I

THE MORTALS IN THE HOUSE

UNDER none of the accredited ghostly circumstar environed by none of the conventional ghostly surr did I first make acquaintance with the house whicl. subject of this Christmas piece. I saw it in the daylight, the sun upon it. There was no wind, no rain, no lightning, no thunder, no awful or unwonted circumstance of any kind, to heighten its effect. More than that: I had come to it direct from a railway station; it was not more than a mile distant from the railway station; and as I stood outside the house, looking back upon the way I had come, I could see the goods train running smoothly along the embankment in the valley. I will not say that everything was utterly commonplace, because I doubt if anything can be that, except to utterly commonplace people — and there my vanity steps in; but I will take it on myself to say that anybody might see the house as I saw it, any fine autumn morning.

The manner of my lighting on it was this.

I was travelling towards London out of the North, intending to stop by the way, to look at the house. My health required a temporary residence in the country; and a friend of mine who knew that, and who had happened to drive past the house, had written to me to suggest it as a likely place. I had got into the train at midnight, and had fallen asleep, and had woke up and had sat looking out of window at the brilliant Northern Lights in the sky, and had fallen asleep again, and had woke up again to find the night gone, with the usual discontented conviction on me that I hadn't been to sleep at all; — upon

[1] The original has eight chapters, which will be found in *All the Year Home* vol. ii. old series; but those not printed here, excepting a page at the were not written by Mr Dickens.

which question, in the first imbecility of that condition, I am ashamed to believe that I would have done wager by battle with the man who sat opposite me. That opposite man had had, through the night, — as that opposite man always has, — several legs too many, and all of them too long. In addition to this unreasonable conduct (which was only to be expected of him), he had had a pencil and a pocket-book, and had been perpetually listening and taking notes. It had appeared to me that these aggravating notes related to the jolts and bumps of the carriage, and I should have resigned myself to his taking them, under a general supposition that he was in the civil-engineering way of life, if he had not sat staring straight over my head whenever he listened. He was a goggle-eyed gentleman of a perplexed aspect, and his demeanour became unbearable.

It was a cold, dead morning (the sun not being up yet), and when I had out-watched the paling light of the fires of the iron country, and the curtain of heavy smoke that hung at once between me and the stars and between me and the day, I turned to my fellow-traveller and said: —

"I *beg* your pardon, sir, but do you observe anything particular in me?" For, really, he appeared to be taking down either my travelling cap or my hair, with a minuteness that was a liberty.

The goggle-eyed gentleman withdrew his eyes from behind me, as if the back of the carriage were a hundred miles off, and said, with a lofty look of compassion for my insignificance: —

"In you, sir? — B."

"B, sir?" said I, growing warm.

"I have nothing to do with you, sir," returned the gentleman; "pray let me listen — O."

He enunciated this vowel after a pause, and noted it down.

At first I was alarmed, for an express lunatic and no communication with the guard is a serious position. The thought came to my relief that the gentleman might be what is popularly called a Rapper: one of a sect for (some of) whom I have the highest respect, but whom I don't believe in. I was going to ask him the question, when he took the bread out of my mouth.

"You will excuse me," said the gentleman contemptuously, "if I am too much in advance of common humanity to trou-

myself at all about it. I have passed the night – pass the whole of my time now — in spiritual inter

"Oh!" said I, something snappishly.

"The conferences of the night began," continue man, turning several leaves of his note-book, message: 'Evil communications corrupt good manı

"Sound," said I; "but absolutely new?"

"New from spirits," returned the gentleman.

I could only repeat my rather snappish, "Oh!" and ask might be favoured with the last communication.

"'A bird in the hand,' said the gentleman, reading his entry with great solemnity, 'is worth two in the Bosh.'"

"Truly I am of the same opinion," said I; "but shou it be 'Bush'?"

"It came to me 'Bosh,'" returned the gentleman.

The gentleman then informed me that the spirit of Socrates had delivered this special revelation in the course of the night. "My friend, I hope you are pretty well. There are two in this railway carriage. How do you do? There are seventeen thousand four hundred and seventy-nine spirits here, but you cannot see them. Pythagoras is here. He is not at liberty to mention it, but hopes you like travelling." Galileo likewise had dropped in, with this scientific intelligence. "I am glad to see you, *amico. Come sta?* Water will freeze when it is cold enough. *Addio!*" In the course of the night, also, the following phenomena had occurred. Bishop Butler had insisted on spelling his name "Bubler," for which offence against orthography and good manners he had been dismissed as out of temper. John Milton (suspected of wilful mystification) had repudiated the authorship of "Paradise Lost," and had introduced, as joint authors of that poem, two unknown gentlemen, respectively named Grungers and Scadgingtone. And Prince Arthur, nephew of King John of England, had described himself as tolerably comfortable in the seventh circle, where he was learning to paint on velvet, under the direction of Mrs. Trimmer and Mary Queen of Scots.

If this should meet the eye of the gentleman who favoured me with these disclosures, I trust he will excuse my confessing that the sight of the rising sun, and the contemplation of the magnificent Order of the vast Universe, made me impatient of them. In a word, I was so impatient of them that I was

The landlord looked at me again, and then, with his former appearance of desperation, called down his stable-yard for "Ikey!"

The call produced a high-shouldered young fellow, with a round red face, a short crop of sandy hair, a very broad, humorous mouth, a turned-up nose, and a great sleeved waistcoat of purple bars, with mother-of-pearl buttons, that seemed to be growing upon him, and to be in a fair way — if it were not pruned — of covering his head and over-running his boots.

"This gentleman wants to know," said the landlord, "if anything's seen at the Poplars."

"'Ooded woman with a howl," said Ikey, in a state of great freshness.

"Do you mean a cry?"

"I mean a bird, sir."

"A hooded woman with an owl. Dear me! Did you ever see her?"

"I seen the howl."

"Never the woman?"

"Not so plain as the howl, but they always keeps together."

"Has anybody ever seen the woman as plainly as the owl?"

"Lord bless you, sir! Lots."

"Who?"

"Lord bless you, sir! Lots."

"The general dealer opposite, for instance, who is opening his shop?"

"Perkins? Bless you, Perkins would n't go anigh the place. No!" observed the young man, with considerable feeling; "he ain't overwise, ain't Perkins, but he ain't such a fool as *that*."

(Here the landlord murmured his confidence in Perkins's knowing better.)

"Who is — or who was — the hooded woman with the owl? Do you know?"

"Well!" said Ikey, holding up his cap with one hand while he scratched his head with the other, "they say, in general, that she was murdered, and the howl he 'ooted the while."

This very concise summary of the facts was all I could learn, except that a young man, as hearty and likely a young man as ever I see, had been took with fits and held down in 'em, after

closed book, the unfinished but abandoned occupation, all are images of Death. The tranquillity of the hour is the tranquillity of Death. The colour and the chill have the same association. Even a certain air that familiar household objects take upon them when they first emerge from the shadows of the night into the morning, of being newer, and as they used to be long ago, has its counterpart in the subsidence of the worn face of maturity or age, in death, into the old youthful look. Moreover, I once saw the apparition of my father at this hour. He was alive and well, and nothing ever came of it, but I saw him in the daylight, sitting with his back towards me, on a seat that stood beside my bed. His head was resting on his hand, and whether he was slumbering, or grieving, I could not discern. Amazed to see him there, I sat up, moved my position, leaned out of bed, and watched him. As he did not move, I spoke to him more than once. As he did not move then, I became alarmed and laid my hand upon his shoulder, as I thought — and there was no such thing.

For all these reasons, and for others less easily and briefly statable, I find the early morning to be my most ghostly time. Any house would be more or less haunted, to me, in the early morning; and a haunted house could scarcely address me to greater advantage than then.

I walked on into the village, with the desertion of this house upon my mind, and I found the landlord of the little inn sanding his door-step. I bespoke breakfast, and broached the subject of the house.

"Is it haunted?" I asked.

The landlord looked at me, shook his head, and answered, "I say nothing."

"Then it *is* haunted?"

"Well!" cried the landlord, in an outburst of frankness that had the appearance of desperation — "I would n't sleep in it."

"Why not?"

"If I wanted to have all the bells in a house ring, with nobody to ring 'em; and all the doors in a house bang, with nobody to bang 'em; and all sorts of feet treading about, with no feet there, — why, then," said the landlord, "I 'd sleep in that house."

"Is anything seen there?"

whip and harness maker, who keeps the Post Office, and is under submission to a most rigorous wife of the Doubly Seceding Little Emmanuel persuasion), and went up to the house, attended by my landlord and by Ikey.

Within, I found it, as I had expected, transcendently dismal. The slowly changing shadows waved on it from the heavy trees were doleful in the last degree; the house was ill placed, ill built, ill planned, and ill fitted. It was damp, it was not free from dry-rot, there was a flavour of rats in it, and it was the gloomy victim of that indescribable decay which settles on all the work of man's hands whenever it is not turned to man's account. The kitchens and offices were too large, and too remote from each other. Above-stairs and below, waste tracts of passage intervened between patches of fertility represented by rooms; and there was a mouldy old well with a green growth upon it, hiding like a murderous trap, near the bottom of the back stairs, under the double row of bells. One of these bells was labelled, on a black ground in faded white letters, MASTER B. This, they told me, was the bell that rang the most.

"Who was Master B.?" I asked. "Is it known what he did while the owl hooted?"

"Rang the bell," said Ikey.

I was rather struck by the prompt dexterity with which this young man pitched his fur cap at the bell, and rang it himself. It was a loud, unpleasant bell, and made a very disagreeable sound. The other bells were inscribed according to the names of the rooms to which their wires were conducted: as "Picture Room," "Double Room," "Clock Room," and the like. Following Master B.'s bell to its source, I found that young gentleman to have had but indifferent third-class accommodation in a triangular cabin under the cock-loft, with a corner fireplace which Master B. must have been exceedingly small if he were ever able to warm himself at, and a corner chimney-piece like a pyramidal staircase to the ceiling for Tom Thumb. The papering of one side of the room had dropped down bodily, with fragments of plaster adhering to it, and almost blocked up the door. It appeared that Master B., in his spiritual condition, always made a point of pulling the paper down. Neither the landlord nor Ikey could suggest why he made such a fool of himself.

Except that the house had an immensely large rambling loft

at top, I made no other discoveries. It was mo
furnished, but sparely. Some of the furniture —
— was as old as the house; the rest was of va
within the last half century. I was referred to a
in the market-place of the county town to treat f
I went that day, and I took it for six months.

It was just the middle of October when I move
maiden sister (I venture to call her eight-and-thir
very handsome, sensible, and engaging). We to
deaf stable-man, my blood-hound Turk, two wo
and a young person called an Odd Girl. I have [illegible]
of the attendant last enumerat[illegible] one [illegible]
rence's Union Female Orphans, that she was a fatal [illegible]
and a disastrous engagement.

The year was dying early, the leaves were falling fast, it was a raw cold day when we took possession, and the gloom of house was most depressing. The cook (an amiable woman, of a weak turn of intellect) burst into tears on beholding [illegible] kitchen, and requested that her silver watch might be deliv[illegible] over to her sister (2 Tuppintock's Gardens, Liggs's Walk, [illegible] ham Rise), in the event of anything happening to her from the damp. Streaker, the housemaid, feigned cheerfulness, but was the greater martyr. The Odd Girl, who had never been in the country, alone was pleased, and made arrangements for sowing an acorn in the garden outside the scullery window, and rearing an oak.

We went, before dark, through all the natural — as opposed to supernatural — miseries incidental to our state. Dispiriting reports ascended (like the smoke) from the basement in volumes, and descended from the upper rooms. There was no rolling pin, there was no salamander (which failed to surprise me, for I don't know what it is), there was nothing in the house, what there was was broken, the last people must have lived like pigs, what could the meaning of the landlord be? Through these distresses, the Odd Girl was cheerful and exemplary. But within four hours after dark we had got into a supernatural groove, and the Odd Girl had seen "Eyes," and was in hysterics.

My sister and I had agreed to keep the [illegible] strictly to ourselves, and my impression was, and [illegible] that I [illegible] not left Ikey, when he helped to [illegible] the [illegible] women, or any one of them, for one [illegible] Nevertheless, to

I say, the Odd Girl had seen "Eyes" (no other explanation could ever be drawn from her) before nine, and by ten o'clock had had as much vinegar applied to her as would pickle a handsome salmon.

I leave a discerning public to judge of my feelings, when, under these untoward circumstances, at about half-past ten o'clock, Master B.'s bell began to ring in a most infuriated manner, and Turk howled until the house resounded with his lamentations!

I hope I may never again be in a state of mind so unchristian as the mental frame in which I lived for some weeks, respecting the memory of Master B. Whether his bell was rung by rats, or mice, or bats, or wind, or what other accidental vibration, or sometimes by one cause, sometimes another, and sometimes by collusion, I don't know; but certain it is that it did ring two nights out of three, until I conceived the happy idea of twisting Master B.'s neck — in other words, breaking his bell short off — and silencing that young gentleman, as to my experience and belief, for ever.

But by that time, the Odd Girl had developed such improving powers of catalepsy that she had become a shining example of that very inconvenient disorder. She would stiffen, like a Guy Fawkes endowed with unreason, on the most irrelevant occasions. I would address the servants in a lucid manner, pointing out to them that I had painted Master B.'s room and balked the paper, and taken Master B.'s bell away and balked the ringing, and if they could suppose that that confounded boy had lived and died, to clothe himself with no better behaviour than would most unquestionably have brought him and the sharpest particles of a birch-broom into close acquaintance in the present imperfect state of existence, could they also suppose a mere poor human being, such as I was, capable by those contemptible means of counteracting and limiting the powers of the disembodied spirits of the dead, or of any spirits? — I say I would become emphatic and cogent, not to say rather complacent, in such an address, when it would all go for nothing by reason of the Odd Girl's suddenly stiffening from the toes upward, and glaring among us like a parochial petrifaction.

Streaker, the housemaid, too, had an attribute of a most discomforting nature. I am unable to say whether she was of an unusually lymphatic temperament, or what else was the matter

with her, but this young woman became a mere the production of the largest and most transparen met with. Combined with these characteristics w tenacity of hold in those specimens, so that they di hung upon her face and nose. In this conditio id and deplorably shaking her head, her silence wo thr more heavily than the Admirable Crichton could have done a verbal disputation for a purse of money. Cook, likew always covered me with confusion as with a garment, by ne winding up the session with the protest that the 'Ouse was ing her out, and by meekly repeating her last wishes rega her silver watch.

As to our nightly life, the contagion of suspicion and f was among us, and there is no such contagion under the sky. Hooded woman? According to the accounts, we were in perfect Convent of hooded women. Noises? With that con tagion down stairs, I myself have sat in the dismal parlour listening, until I have heard so many and such strange noises that they would have chilled my blood if I had not warmed it by dashing out to make discoveries. Try this in bed, in the dead of the night; try this at your own comfortable fireside, in the life of the night. You can fill any house with noises, if you will, until you have a noise for every nerve in your nervous system.

I repeat; the contagion of suspicion and fear was among us, and there is no such contagion under the sky. The women (their noses in a chronic state of excoriation from smelling-salts) were always primed and loaded for a swoon, and ready to go off with hair-triggers. The two elder detached the Odd Girl on all expeditions that were considered doubly hazardous, and she always established the reputation of such adventures by coming back cataleptic. If Cook or Streaker went overhead after dark, we knew we should presently hear a bump on the ceiling; and this took place so constantly that it was as if a fighting-man were engaged to go about the house, administering a touch of his art which I believe is called The Auctioneer, to every domestic he met with.

It was in vain to do anything. It was in vain to be frightened, for the moment in one's own person, by a real owl, and then to show the owl. It was in vain to discover, by striking an accidental discord on the piano, that Turk always howled

at particular notes and combinations. It was in vain to be a Rhadamanthus with the bells, and if an unfortunate bell rang without leave, to have it down inexorably and silence it. It was in vain to fire up chimneys, let torches down the well, charge furiously into suspected rooms and recesses. We changed servants, and it was no better. The new set ran away, and a third set came, and it was no better. At last, our comfortable housekeeping got to be so disorganised and wretched that I one night dejectedly said to my sister: "Patty, I begin to despair of our getting people to go on with us here, and I think we must give this up."

My sister, who is a woman of immense spirit, replied, "No, John, don't give it up. Don't be beaten, John. There is another way."

"And what is that?" said I.

"John," returned my sister, "if we are not to be driven out of this house, and that for no reason whatever, that is apparent to you or me, we must help ourselves, and take the house wholly and solely into our own hands."

"But the servants," said I.

"Have no servants," said my sister boldly.

Like most people in my grade of life, I had never thought of the possibility of going on without those faithful obstructions. The notion was so new to me when suggested that I looked very doubtful.

"We know they come here to be frightened and infect one another, and we know they are frightened and do infect one another," said my sister.

"With the exception of Bottles," I observed in a meditative tone.

(The deaf stable-man. I kept him in my service, and still keep him as a phenomenon of moroseness not to be matched in England.)

"To be sure, John," assented my sister; "except Bottles. And what does that go to prove? Bottles talks to nobody, and hears nobody unless he is absolutely roared at, and what alarm has Bottles ever given, or taken? None."

This was perfectly true; the individual in question having retired, every night at ten o'clock, to his bed over the coach-house, with no other company than a pitchfork and a pail of water. That the pail of water would have been over me, and

the pitchfork through me, if I had put myself wit[illegible] ment in Bottles's way after that minute, I had d[illegible] own mind as a fact worth remembering. Neit[illegible]r ha[illegible] ever taken the least notice of any of our many uproars, imperturbable and speechless man, he had sat at his supper, Streaker present in a swoon, and the Odd Girl marble, and only put another potato in his cheek, or profited by the gene[illegible] misery to help himself to beef-steak pie.

"And so," continued my sister, "I exempt Bottles. An[illegible] considering, John, that the house is too large, and perhaps too lonely, to be kept well in hand by Bottles, you, and me, I propose that we cast about an[illegible]ds for a certain selected number of the most relial[illegible] wi[illegible]g — form a Society here for three months — wait u[illegible] ourselves and one another — live cheerfully and socially — [illegible] see what happens."

I was so charmed with [illegible]sister that I embraced her on the spot, and went into her pl[illegible] with the greatest ardour.

We were then in the t[illegible]d week of November; but we took our measures so vigorousl[illegible] and were so well seconded by the friends in whom we confid[illegible]l, that there was still a week of the month unexpired, when our party all came down together merrily, and mustered in the haunted house.

I will mention, in this place, two small changes that I made while my sister and I were yet alone. It occurring to me as not improbable that Turk howled in the house at night, partly because he wanted to get out of it, I stationed him in his kennel outside, but unchained; and I seriously warned the village that any man who came in his way must not expect to leave him without a rip in his own throat. I then casually asked Ikey if he were a judge of a gun? On his saying, "Yes, sir, I knows a good gun when I sees her." I begged the favour of his stepping up to the house and looking at mine.

"*She*'s a true one, sir," said Ikey, after inspecting a double-barrelled rifle that I bought in New York a few years ago. "No mistake about *her*, sir."

"Ikey," said I, "don't mention it; I have seen something in this house."

"No, sir!" he whispered, greedily opening his eyes. "'Ooded lady, sir?"

"Don't be frightened," said I. "It was a figure rather like you."

"Lord, sir!"

"Ikey," said I, shaking hands with him warmly, I may say affectionately, "if there is any truth in these ghost stories, the greatest service I can do you, is, to fire at that figure. And I promise you, by Heaven and earth, I will do it with this gun if I see it again!"

The young man thanked me, and took his leave with some little precipitation, after declining a glass of liquor. I imparted my secret to him, because I had never quite forgotten his throwing his cap at the bell, because I had, on another occasion, noticed something very like a fur cap, lying not far from the bell, one night when it had burst out ringing, and because I had remarked that we were at our ghostliest whenever he came up in the evening to comfort the servants. Let me do Ikey no injustice. He was afraid of the house, and believed in its being haunted; and yet he would play false on the haunting side, so surely as he got an opportunity. The Odd Girl's case was exactly similar. She went about the house in a state of real terror, and yet lied monstrously and wilfully, and invented many of the alarms she spread, and made many of the sounds we heard. I had had my eye on the two, and I know it. It is not necessary for me, here, to account for this preposterous state of mind; I content myself with remarking that it is familiarly known to every intelligent man who has had fair medical, legal, or other watchful experience; that it is as well established and as common a state of mind as any with which observers are acquainted; and that it is one of the first elements, above all others, rationally to be suspected in, and strictly looked for, and separated from, any question of this kind.

To return to our party. The first thing we did, when we were all assembled, was to draw lots for bedrooms. That done, and every bedroom, and, indeed, the whole house, having been minutely examined by the whole body, we allotted the various household duties, as if we had been on a gipsy party, or a yachting party, or a hunting party, or were shipwrecked. I then recounted the floating rumours concerning the hooded lady, the owl, and Master B., with others, still more filmy, which had floated about during our occupation, relative to some ridiculous old ghost of the female gender who went up and down, carrying the ghost of a round table; and also to an impalpable Jackass, whom nobody was ever able to catch. Some of these ideas

I really believe our people below had communi
another in some diseased way, without conveying th
We then gravely called one another to witness, tha
there to be deceived, or to deceive, — which we c
pretty much the same thing, — and that, with a ser
responsibility, we would be strictly true to one
would strictly follow out the truth. The under[illegible]
established, that any one who heard unusual noises in the n
and who wished to trace them, should knock at my door; la
that on Twelfth Night, the last night of holy Christmas, our individual experiences since that then present hour of coming together in the haunted house should be brought light for the good of all; and that we would hold our peace [illegible] the subject till then, unless on some remarkable provocation to break silence.

We were, in number and in character, as follows: —

First, to get my sister and myself out of the way — there were we two. In the drawing of lots, my sister drew her own room, and I drew Master B.'s. Next, there was our first cousi John Herschel, so called after the great astronomer, than whom I suppose a better man at a telescope does not breathe. With him was his wife, a charming creature, to whom he had been married in the previous spring. I thought it (under the circumstances) rather imprudent to bring her, because there is no knowing what even a false alarm may do at such a time; but I suppose he knew his own business best, and I must say that if she had been *my* wife, I never could have left her endearing and bright face behind. They drew the Clock Room. Alfred Starling, an uncommonly agreeable young fellow of eight and twenty for whom I have the greatest liking, was in the Double Room; mine usually, and designated by that name from having a dressing-room within it, with two large and cumbersome windows, which no wedges *I* was ever able to make would keep from shaking, in any weather, wind or no wind. Alfred is a young fellow who pretends to be "fast" (another word for loose, as I understand the term), but who is much too good and sensible for that nonsense, and who would have distinguished himself before now if his father had not unfortunately left him a small independence of two hundred a year, on the strength of which his only occupation in life has been to spend six. I am in hopes, however, that his Banker may break, or

that he may enter into some speculation guaranteed to pay twenty per cent.; for I am convinced that if he could only be ruined, his fortune is made. Belinda Bates, bosom friend of my sister, and a most intellectual, amiable, and delightful girl, got the Picture Room. She has a fine genius for poetry, combined with real business earnestness, and "goes in" — to use an expression of Alfred's — for Woman's mission, Woman's rights, Woman's wrongs, and everything that is woman's with a capital W, or is not and ought to be, or is and ought not to be. "Most praiseworthy, my dear, and Heaven prosper you!" I whispered to her on the first night of my taking leave of her at the Picture-Room door, "but don't overdo it. And in respect of the great necessity there is, my darling, for more employments being within the reach of Woman than our civilisation has yet assigned to her, don't fly at the unfortunate men, even those men who are at first sight in your way, as if they were the natural oppressors of your sex; for, trust me, Belinda, they do sometimes spend their wages among wives and daughters, sisters, mothers, aunts, and grandmothers; and the play is, really, not *all* Wolf and Red Riding-Hood, but has other parts in it." However I digress.

Belinda, as I have mentioned, occupied the Picture Room. We had but three other chambers: the Corner Room, the Cupboard Room, and the Garden Room. My old friend, Jack Governor, "slung his hammock," as he called it, in the Corner Room. I have always regarded Jack as the finest-looking sailor that ever sailed. He is grey now, but as handsome as he was a quarter of a century ago — nay, handsomer. A portly, cheery, well-built figure of a broad-shouldered man, with a frank smile, a brilliant dark eye, and a rich dark eyebrow. I remember those under darker hair, and they look all the better for their silver setting. He has been wherever his Union namesake flies, has Jack, and I have met old shipmates of his away in the Mediterranean and on the other side of the Atlantic, who have beamed and brightened at the casual mention of his name, and have cried, "You know Jack Governor? Then you know a prince of men!" That he is! And so unmistakably a naval officer, that if you were to meet him coming out of an Esquimaux snow-hut in seal's skin, you would be vaguely persuaded he was in full naval uniform.

Jack once had that bright clear eye of his on my sister; but

it fell out that he married another lady, and took
America, where she died. This was a dozen years
He brought down with him to our haunted house
of salt beef; for he is always convinced that all sa
his own pickling is mere carrion, and invariably, wh
London, packs a piece in his portmanteau. He ha
teered to bring with him one "Nat Beaver," an ol
his, captain of a merchantman. Mr. Beaver, witl
wooden face and figure, and apparently as hard as ... ck
over, proved to be an intelligent man, with a wor ...
experiences in him, and great practical knowledge ... At
there was a curious nervous ... the
gering result of some old illn ... but it se... lasted n
minutes. He got the Cupboa... oom, and lay there nex
Mr. Undery, my friend and solicitor, who came down, in an amateur capacity, "to go through with it," as he said, and who plays whist better than the whole Law List, from the red cover at the beginning to the red cover at the end.

I never was happier in my life, and I believe it was the universal feeling among us. Jack Governor, always a man of wonderful resources, was Chief Cook, and made some of the best dishes I ever ate, including unapproachable curries. My sister was pastry-cook and confectioner. Starling and I were Cook's Mate, turn and turn about, and on special occasions the chief cook "pressed" Mr. Beaver. We had a great deal of out-door sport and exercise, but nothing was neglected within, and there was no ill-humour or misunderstanding among us, and our evenings were so delightful that we had at least one good reason for being reluctant to go to bed.

We had a few night alarms in the beginning. On the first night I was knocked up by Jack with a most wonderful ship's lantern in his hand, like the gills of some monster of the deep, who informed me that he was "going aloft to the main truck," to have the weathercock down. It was a stormy night, and I remonstrated; but Jack called my attention to its making a sound like a cry of despair, and said somebody would be "hailing a ghost" presently, if it wasn't done. So, up to the top of the house, where I could hardly stand for the wind, we went, accompanied by Mr. Beaver; and there Jack, lantern and all, with Mr. Beaver after him, swarmed up to the top of a cupola, some two dozen feet above the chimneys, and stood upon no-

thing particular, coolly knocking the weathercock off, until they both got into such good spirits with the wind and the height, that I thought they would never come down. Another night, they turned out again, and had a chimney-cowl off. Another night, they cut a sobbing and gulping water-pipe away. Another night, they found out something else. On several occasions, they both, in the coolest manner, simultaneously dropped out of their respective bedroom windows, hand over hand by their counterpanes, to "overhaul" something mysterious in the garden.

The engagement among us was faithfully kept, and nobody revealed anything. All we knew was, if any one's room were haunted, no one looked the worse for it.

II

THE GHOST IN MASTER B.'S ROOM

WHEN I established myself in the triangular garret which had gained so distinguished a reputation, my thoughts naturally turned to Master B. My speculations about him were uneasy and manifold. Whether his Christian name was Benjamin, Bissextile (from his having been born in Leap Year), Bartholomew, or Bill. Whether the initial letter belonged to his family name, and that was Baxter, Black, Brown, Barker, Buggins, Baker, or Bird. Whether he was a foundling, and had been baptized B. Whether he was a lion-hearted boy, and B. was short for Briton, or for Bull. Whether he could possibly have been kith and kin to an illustrious lady who brightened my own childhood, and had come of the blood of the brilliant Mother Bunch?

With these profitless meditations I tormented myself much. I also carried the mysterious letter into the appearance and pursuits of the deceased; wondering whether he dressed in Blue, wore Boots (he couldn't have been Bald), was a boy of Brains, liked Books, was good at Bowling, had any skill as a Boxer, even in his Buoyant Boyhood Bathed from a Bathing-machine at Bognor, Bangor, Bournemouth, Brighton, or Broadstairs, like a Bounding Billiard Ball?

So, from the first, I was haunted by the letter B.

It was not long before I remarked that I ne[illegible] hamnl had a dream of Master B., or of anything [illegible] him. But the instant I awoke from sleep, at what [illegible] the night, my thoughts took him up, and roamed [illegible] to attach his initial letter to something that wou[illegible] keep it quiet.

For six nights I had been worried thus in Maste[illegible] when I began to perceive that things were going w[illegible]

The first appearance that presented itself was [illegible] in [illegible] morning, when it was but just daylight and no [illegible] I [illegible] standing shaving at my glass, when I suddenly d[illegible]vered, to my consternation and amazement, that I was shaving — not myself — I am fifty — but a boy. Apparently Master B.!

I trembled and looked over my shoulder; nothing there. I looked again in the glass, and distinctly saw the features and expression of a boy, who was shaving, not to get rid of a beard, but to get one. Extremely troubled in my mind, I took a few turns in the room, and went back to the looking-glass, resolved to steady my hand, and complete the operation in which I had been disturbed. Opening my eyes, which I had shut while recovering my firmness, I now met in the glass, looking straight at me, the eyes of a young man of four or five and twenty. Terrified by this new ghost, I closed my eyes, and made a strong effort to recover myself. Opening them again, I saw, shaving his cheek in the glass, my father, who has long been dead. Nay, I even saw my grandfather, too, whom I never did see in my life.

Although naturally much affected by these remarkable visitations, I determined to keep my secret, until the time agreed upon for the present general disclosure. Agitated by a multitude of curious thoughts, I retired to my room, that night, prepared to encounter some new experience of a spectral character. Nor was my preparation needless, for, waking from an uneasy sleep at exactly two in the morning, what were my feelings to find that I was sharing my bed with the skeleton of Master B.!

I sprang up, and the skeleton sprang up also. I then heard a plaintive voice saying, "Where am I? What is become of me?" and, looking hard in that direction, perceived the ghost of Master B.

The young spectre was dressed in an obsolete fashion; or

rather, was not so much dressed as put into a case of inferior pepper-and-salt cloth, made horrible by means of shining buttons. I observed that these buttons went, in a double row, over each shoulder of the young ghost, and appeared to descend his back. He wore a frill round his neck. His right hand (which I distinctly noticed to be inky) was laid upon his stomach; connecting this action with some feeble pimples on his countenance, and his general air of nausea, I concluded this ghost to be the ghost of a boy who had habitually taken a great deal too much medicine.

"Where am I?" said the little spectre in a pathetic voice. "And why was I born in the Calomel days, and why did I have all that Calomel given me?"

I replied, with sincere earnestness, that upon my soul I could n't tell him.

"Where is my little sister," said the ghost, "and where my angelic little wife, and where is the boy I went to school with?"

I entreated the phantom to be comforted, and, above all things, to take heart respecting the loss of the boy he went to school with. I represented to him that probably that boy never did, within human experience, come out well when discovered. I urged that I myself had, in later life, turned up several boys whom I went to school with, and none of them had at all answered. I expressed my humble belief that that boy never did answer. I represented that he was a mythic character, a delusion, and a snare. I recounted how, the last time I found him, I found him at a dinner-party behind a wall of white cravat, with an inconclusive opinion on every possible subject, and a power of silent boredom absolutely Titanic. I related how, on the strength of our having been together at "Old Doylance's," he had asked himself to breakfast with me (a social offence of the largest magnitude); how, fanning my weak embers of belief in Doylance's boys, I had let him in; and how he had proved to be a fearful wanderer about the earth, pursuing the race of Adam with inexplicable notions concerning the currency, and with a proposition that the Bank of England should, on pain of being abolished, instantly strike off, and circulate, God knows how many thousand millions of ten-and-sixpenny notes.

The ghost heard me in silence, and with a fixed stare. "Barber!" it apostrophised me when I had finished.

"Barber?" I repeated — for I am not of that p

"Condemned," said the ghost, "to shave a con

of customers — now, me — now, a young man — now,

as thou art — now, thy father — now, thy grandfather,

demned, too, to lie down with a skeleton every night, and

rise with it every morning —"

(I shuddered on hearing this dismal announcement.)

"Barber! Pursue me!"

I had felt, even before the words were uttered, that I was under a spell to pursue the phantom. I immediately did so, and was in Master B.'s room no longer.

Most people know what long and fatiguing night journeys had been forced upon the witches who used to confess, and who, no doubt, told the exact truth — particularly as they were always assisted with leading questions, and the torture was always ready. I asseverate that, during my occupation of Master B.'s room, I was taken by the ghost that haunted it on expeditions fully as long and wild as any of those. Assuredly, I was presented to no shabby old man with a goat's horns and tail (something between Pan and an old-clothes man), holding conventional receptions, as stupid as those of real life and less decent; but I came upon other things which appeared to me to have more meaning.

Confident that I speak the truth and shall be believed, I declare without hesitation that I followed the ghost, in the first instance on a broomstick, and afterwards on a rocking-horse. The very smell of the animal's paint — especially when I brought it out, by making him warm — I am ready to swear to. I followed the ghost, afterwards, in a hackney-coach; an institution with the peculiar smell of which the present generation is unacquainted, but to which I am again ready to swear as a combination of stable, dog with the mange, and very old bellows. (In this I appeal to previous generations to confirm or refute me.) I pursued the phantom on a headless donkey; at least, upon a donkey who was so interested in the state of his stomach that his head was always down there, investigating it; on ponies, expressly born to kick up behind; on roundabouts and swings, from fairs; in the first cab — another forgotten institution, where the fare regularly got into bed, and was tucked up with the driver.

Not to trouble you with a detailed account of all my trave

in pursuit of the ghost of Master B., which were longer and more wonderful than those of Sindbad the Sailor, I will confine myself to one experience from which you may judge of many.

I was marvellously changed. I was myself, yet not myself. I was conscious of something within me, which has been the same all through my life, and which I have always recognised under all its phases and varieties as never altering, and yet I was not the I who had gone to bed in Master B.'s room. I had the smoothest of faces and the shortest of legs, and I had taken another creature like myself, also with the smoothest of faces and the shortest of legs, behind a door, and was confiding to him a proposition of the most astounding nature.

This proposition was that we should have a Seraglio.

The other creature assented warmly. He had no notion of respectability, neither had I. It was the custom of the East, it was the way of the good Caliph Haroun Alraschid (let me have the corrupted name again for once, it is so scented with sweet memories!), the usage was highly laudable, and most worthy of imitation. "Oh, yes! Let us," said the other creature, with a jump, "have a Seraglio."

It was not because we entertained the faintest doubts of the meritorious character of the Oriental establishment we proposed to import, that we perceived it must be kept a secret from Miss Griffin. It was because we knew Miss Griffin to be bereft of human sympathies, and incapable of appreciating the greatness of the great Haroun. Mystery impenetrably shrouded from Miss Griffin then, let us intrust it to Miss Bule.

We were ten in Miss Griffin's establishment by Hampstead Ponds; eight ladies and two gentlemen. Miss Bule, whom I judge to have attained the ripe age of eight or nine, took the lead in society. I opened the subject to her in the course of the day, and proposed that she should become the Favourite.

Miss Bule, after struggling with the diffidence so natural to, and charming in, her adorable sex, expressed herself as flattered by the idea, but wished to know how it was proposed to provide for Miss Pipson? Miss Bule — who was understood to have vowed towards that young lady a friendship, halves, and no secrets, until death, on the Church Service and Lessons complete in two volumes with case and lock — Miss Bule said she could not, as the friend of Pipson, disguise from herself, or me, that Pipson was not one of the common.

Now, Miss Pipson, having curly light hair and blue eyes (which was my idea of anything mortal and feminine that was called Fair), I promptly replied that I regarded Miss Pipson in the light of a fair Circassian.

"And what then?" Miss Bule pensively asked.

I replied that she must be inveigled by a merchant, brought to me veiled, and purchased as a slave.

[The other creature had already fallen into the second male place in the State, and was set apart for Grand Vizier. He afterwards resisted this disposal of events, but had his hair pulled until he yielded.]

"Shall I not be jealous?" Miss Bule inquired, casting down her eyes.

"Zobeide, no," I replied; "you will ever be the favourite Sultana; the first place in my heart, and on my throne, will be ever yours."

Miss Bule, upon that assurance, consented to propound the idea to her seven beautiful companions. It occurring to me, in the course of the same day, that we knew we could trust a grinning and good-natured soul called Tabby, who was the serving drudge of the house, and had no more figure than one of the beds, and upon whose face there was always more or less black-lead, I slipped into Miss Bule's hand, after supper, a little note to that effect; dwelling on the black-lead as being in a manner deposited by the finger of Providence, pointing Tabby out for Mesrour, the celebrated chief of the Blacks of the Hareem.

There were difficulties in the formation of the desired institution, as there are in all combinations. The other creature showed himself of a low character, and, when defeated in aspiring to the throne, pretended to have conscientious scruples about prostrating himself before the Caliph; wouldn't call him Commander of the Faithful; spoke of him slightingly and inconsistently as a mere "chap;" said he, the other creature, "wouldn't play"—Play!—and was otherwise coarse and offensive. This meanness of disposition was, however, put down by the general indignation of an united Seraglio, and I became blessed in the smiles of eight of the fairest of the daughters of men.

The smiles could only be bestowed when Miss Griffin was looking another way, and only then in a very wary manner, for

there was a legend among the followers of the Prophet that she saw with a little round ornament in the middle of the pattern on the back of her shawl. But every day after dinner, for an hour, we were altogether, and then the Favourite and the rest of the Royal Hareem competed who should most beguile the leisure of the Serene Haroun reposing from the cares of State — which were generally, as in most affairs of State, of an arithmetical character, the Commander of the Faithful being a fearful boggler at a sum.

On these occasions, the devoted Mesrour, chief of the Blacks of the Hareem, was always in attendance (Miss Griffin usually ringing for that officer, at the same time, with great vehemence), but never acquitted himself in a manner worthy of his historical reputation. In the first place, his bringing a broom into the Divan of the Caliph, even when Haroun wore on his shoulders the red robe of anger (Miss Pipson's pelisse), though it might be got over for the moment, was never to be quite satisfactorily accounted for. In the second place, his breaking out into grinning exclamations of "Lork you pretties!" was neither Eastern nor respectful. In the third place, when specially instructed to say "Bismillah!" he always said "Hallelujah!" This officer, unlike his class, was too good-humoured altogether, kept his mouth open far too wide, expressed approbation to an incongruous extent, and even once — it was on the occasion of the purchase of the fair Circassian for five hundred thousand purses of gold, and cheap, too — embraced the Slave, the Favourite, and the Caliph, all round. (Parenthetically let me say God bless Mesrour, and may there have been sons and daughters on that tender bosom, softening many a hard day since!)

Miss Griffin was a model of propriety, and I am at a loss to imagine what the feelings of the virtuous woman would have been if she had known, when she paraded us down the Hampstead Road two and two, that she was walking with a stately step at the head of Polygamy and Mohammedanism. I believe that a mysterious and terrible joy with which the contemplation of Miss Griffin in this unconscious state inspired us, and a grim sense prevalent among us that there was a dreadful power in our knowledge of what Miss Griffin (who knew all things that could be learnt out of book) did n't know, were the mainspring of the preservation of our secret. It was wonderfully kept, but was once upon the verge of self-betrayal. The danger and

escape occurred upon a Sunday. We were all ten
conspicuous part of the gallery at church, with Mi
our head — as we were every Sunday — advertising tl
ment in an unsecular sort of way — when the desc
Solomon in his domestic glory happened to be re[illegible]
moment that monarch was thus referred to, conscience whisp[illegible]
me, "Thou, too, Haroun!" The officiating minister had a [illegible]
in his eye, and it assisted conscience by giving him the app[illegible]
ance of reading personally at me. A crimson blush, attended
by a fearful perspiration, suffused my features. The Grand Vizier became more dead than alive, and the whole Seraglio reddened as if the sunset of Bagdad shone direct upon their lovely faces. At this portentous time the awful Griffin rose, and balefully surveyed the children of Islam. My own impression was that Church and State had entered into a conspiracy with Miss Griffin to expose us, and that we should all be put into white sheets and exhibited in the centre aisle. But so Westerly — if I may be allowed the expression as opposite to Eastern associations — was Miss Griffin's sense of rectitude that she merely suspected Apples, and we were saved.

I have called the Seraglio united. Upon the question, solely, whether the Commander of the Faithful durst exercise a right of kissing in that sanctuary of the palace, were its peerless inmates divided. Zobeide asserted a counter-right in the Favourite to scratch, and the fair Circassian put her face, for refuge, into a green baize bag, originally designed for books. On the other hand, a young antelope of transcendent beauty from the fruitful plains of Camden Town (whence she had been brought, by traders, in the half-yearly caravan that crossed the intermediate desert after the holidays) held more liberal opinions, but stipulated for limiting the benefit of them to that dog, and son of a dog, the Grand Vizier — who had no rights and was not in question. At length, the difficulty was compromised by the installation of a very youthful slave as Deputy. [illegible] upon a stool, officially received upon her cheeks the salutes intended by the gracious Haroun for other Sultanas, and was privately rewarded from the coffers of the Ladies of the Harem.

And now it was, at the full height of enjoyment of my [illegible], that I became heavily troubled. I began to think of my mother, and what she would say to my taking home at Midsummer eight of the most beautiful of the daughters of men, but a

unexpected. I thought of the number of beds we made up at our house, of my father's income, and of the baker, and my despondency redoubled. The Seraglio and malicious Vizier, divining the cause of their lord's unhappiness, did their utmost to augment it. They professed unbounded fidelity, and declared that they would live and die with him. Reduced to the utmost wretchedness by these protestations of attachment, I lay awake, for hours at a time, ruminating on my frightful lot. In my despair, I think I might have taken an early opportunity of falling on my knees before Miss Griffin, avowing my resemblance to Solomon, and praying to be dealt with according to the outraged laws of my country, if an unthought-of means of escape had not opened before me.

One day we were out walking, two and two — on which occasion the Vizier had his usual instructions to take note of the boy at the turnpike, and, if he profanely gazed (which he always did) at the beauties of the Harem, to have him bowstrung in the course of the night — and it happened that our hearts were veiled in gloom. An unaccountable action on the part of the antelope had plunged the State into disgrace. That charmer, on the representation that the previous day was her birthday, and that vast treasures had been sent in a hamper for its celebration (both baseless assertions), had secretly but most pressingly invited thirty-five neighbouring princes and princesses to a ball and supper; with a special stipulation that they were "not to be fetched till twelve." This wandering of the antelope's fancy led to the surprising arrival at Miss Griffin's door, in divers equipages and under various escorts, of a great company in full dress, who were deposited on the top step in a flush of high expectancy, and who were dismissed in tears. At the beginning of the double knocks attendant on these ceremonies, the antelope had retired to a back attic, and bolted herself in; and at every new arrival, Miss Griffin had gone so much more and more distracted that at last she had been seen to tear her front. Ultimate capitulation on the part of the offender had been followed by solitude in the linen closet, bread and water, and a lecture to all, of vindictive length, in which Miss Griffin had used expressions: Firstly, "I believe you all of you knew of it;" secondly, "Every one of you is as wicked as another;" thirdly, "A pack of little wretches."

Under these circumstances, we were walking drearily along;

and I especially, with my Moosulmaun responsibilities heavy on me, was in a very low state of mind; when a strange man accosted Miss Griffin, and, after walking on at her side for a little while and talking with her, looked at me. Supposing him to be a minion of the law, and that my hour had come, I instantly ran away, with a general purpose of making for Egypt.

The whole Seraglio cried out when they saw me making off as fast as my legs would carry me (I had an impression that the first turning on the left, and round by the public-house, would be the shortest way to the Pyramids), Miss Griffin screamed after me, the faithless Vizier ran after me, and the boy at the turnpike dodged me into a corner, like a sheep, and cut me off. Nobody scolded me when I was taken and brought back; Miss Griffin only said, with a stunning gentleness, This was very curious! Why had I run away when the gentleman looked at me?

If I had had any breath to answer with, I dare say I should have made no answer; having no breath, I certainly made none. Miss Griffin and the strange man took me between them, and walked me back to the palace in a sort of state; but not at all (as I could n't help feeling, with astonishment) in culprit state.

When we got there, we went into a room by ourselves, and Miss Griffin called in to her assistance Mesrour, chief of the dusky guards of the Hareem. Mesrour, on being whispered to, began to shed tears.

"Bless you, my precious!" said that officer, turning to me; "your pa's took bitter bad!"

I asked with a fluttered heart, "Is he very ill?"

"Lord temper the wind to you, my lamb!" said the good Mesrour, kneeling down, that I might have a comforting shoulder for my head to rest on; "your pa's dead!"

Haroun Alraschid took to flight at the words; the Seraglio vanished; from that moment I never again saw one of the eight of the fairest of the daughters of men.

I was taken home, and there was Debt at home as well as Death, and we had a sale there. My own little bed was so superciliously looked upon by a Power unknown to me, hazily called "The Trade," that a brass coal-scuttle, a roast[illegible] and a bird-cage were obliged to be put into it to make [illegible] it, and then it went for a song. So I heard mentione[illegible]

wondered what song, and thought what a dismal song it must have been to sing!

Then I was sent to a great, cold, bare school of big boys; where everything to eat and wear was thick and clumpy, with- t being enough; where everybody, large and small, was cruel; the boys knew all about the sale, before I got there, and me what I had fetched, and who had bought me, and hooted at me, "Going, going, gone!" I never whispered in at wretched place that I had been Haroun, or had had a raglio; for I knew that if I mentioned my reverses, I should so worried that I should have to drown myself in the muddy pond near the playground, which looked like the beer.

Ah me, ah me! No other ghost has haunted the boy's room, my friends, since I have occupied it, than the ghost of my own childhood, the ghost of my own innocence, the ghost of my own airy belief. Many a time have I pursued the phantom; never with this man's stride of mine to come up with it, never with these man's hands of mine to touch it, never more to this man's heart of mine to hold it in its purity. And here you see me working out, as cheerfully and thankfully as I may, my doom of shaving in the glass a constant change of customers, and of lying down and rising up with the skeleton allotted to me for my mortal companion.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA

CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE

"AND a mighty sing'lar and pretty place it is, as ever I saw in all the days of my life!" said Captain Jorgan, looking up at it.

Captain Jorgan had to look high to look at it, for the village was built sheer up the face of a steep and lofty cliff. There was no road in it, there was no wheeled vehicle in it, there was not a level yard in it. From the sea-beach to the cliff-top two irregular rows of white houses, placed opposite to one another, and twisting here and there, and there and here, rose, like the sides of a long succession of stages of crooked ladders, and you climbed up the village or climbed down the village by the staves between, some six feet wide or so, and made of sharp, irregular stones. The old pack-saddle, long laid aside in most parts of England as one of the appendages of its infancy, flourished here intact. Strings of pack-horses and pack-donkeys toiled slowly up the staves of the ladders, bearing fish, and coal, and such other cargo as was unshipping at the pier from the dancing fleet of village boats, and from two or three little coasting traders. As the beasts of burden ascended laden, or descended light, they got so lost at intervals in the floating clouds of village smoke that they seemed to dive down some of the village chimneys, and come to the surface again, far off, high above others. No two houses in the village were alike, in chimney, size, shape, door, window, gable, roof-tree, anything. The sides of the ladders were musical with water, running clear and bright. The staves were musical with the clattering feet of the pack-horses and pack-donkeys, and the voices of the fishermen urging them up mingled with the voices of the fishermen's wives and their many children. The pier was musical with the wash of the sea, the creaking of capstans and windlasses, and the airy fluttering

of little vanes and sails. The rough, sea-bleached boulders which the pier was made, and the whiter boulders of the sh were brown with drying nets. The red-brown cliffs, ric wooded to their extremest verge, had their softened and bea ful forms reflected in the bluest water, under the clear N Devonshire sky of a November day without a cloud. ' village itself was so steeped in autumnal foliage, from the hou lying on the pier to the topmost round of the topmost ladder, one might have fancied it was out a birds'-nesting, and was indeed it was) a wonderful climber. And mentioning bi the place was not without some music from them, too; for rook was very busy on the higher levels, and the gull with flapping wings was fishing in the bay, and the lusty little r was hopping among the great stone blocks and iron rings of breakwater, fearless in the faith of his ancestors, and Children in the Wood.

Thus it came to pass that Captain Jorgan, sitting balanc himself on the pier wall, struck his leg with his open hand some men do when they are pleased — and as he always when he was pleased — and said: —

"A mighty sing'lar and pretty place it is, as ever I saw in the days of my life!"

Captain Jorgan had not been through the village, but come down to the pier by a winding side-road, to have a liminary look at it from the level of his own natural elem He had seen many things and places, and had stowed them away in a shrewd intellect and a vigorous memory. He wa American born, was Captain Jorgan, — a New Englander, — he was a citizen of the world, and a combination of most of best qualities of most of its best countries.

For Captain Jorgan to sit anywhere in his long-skirted coat and blue trousers, without holding converse with everyl within speaking distance, was a sheer impossibility. So captain fell to talking with the fishermen, and to asking t knowing questions about the fishery, and the tides, and the rents, and the race of water off that point yonder, and what kept in your eye, and got into a line with what else when ran into the little harbour; and other nautical profund Among the men who exchanged ideas with the captain w young fellow, who exactly hit his fancy, — a young fisher of two or three and twenty, in the rough sea-dress of his (

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with a brown face, dark curling hair, and bright,
under his sou'-wester hat, and with a frank ba
retiring manner, which the captain found uncomm
"I 'd bet a thousand dollars," said the captain to h
your father was an honest man!"

"Might you be married now?" asked the captain, when
had had some talk with his new acquaintance.

"Not yet."

"Going to be?" said the captain.

"I hope so."

The captain's keen glance followed the slightest possible turn of the dark eye, and the slightest possible tilt of the sou'-wester hat. The captain then slapped both his legs, and said to himself: —

"Never knew such a good thing in all my life! There 's his sweetheart looking over the wall!"

There was a very pretty girl looking over the wall, from a little platform of cottage, vine, fuchsia; and she certainly did not look as if the presence of this young fisherman in the landscape made it any the less sunny and hopeful for her.

Captain Jorgan, having doubled himself up to laugh with that hearty good-nature which is quite exultant in the innocent happiness of other people, had undoubled himself, and was going to start a new subject, when there appeared coming down the lower ladders of stones a man whom he hailed as "Tom Pettifer, Ho!" Tom Pettifer, Ho, responded with alacrity, and in speedy course descended on the pier.

"Afraid of a sun-stroke in England in November, Tom, that you wear your tropical hat, strongly paid outside and paper-lined inside, here?" said the captain, eyeing it.

"It 's as well to be on the safe side, sir," replied Tom.

"Safe side!" repeated the captain, laughing. "You 'd guard against a sun-stroke, with that old hat, in an Ice Pack. Wa'al! What have you made out at the Post Office?"

"It *is* the Post Office, sir."

"What 's the Post Office?" said the captain.

"The name, sir. The name keeps the Post Office."

"A coincidence!" said the captain. "A lucky hit! Show me where it is. Good-bye, shipmates, for the present! I shall come and have another look at you, afore I leave, this afternoon."

This was addressed to all there, but especially the young fisherman; so all there acknowledged it, but especially the young fisherman. "*He*'s a sailor!" said one to another, as they looked after the captain moving away. That he was; and so outspeaking was the sailor in him that although his dress had nothing nautical about it, with the single exception of its colour, but was a suit of a shore-going shape and form, too long in the sleeves and too short in the legs, and too unaccommodating everywhere, terminating earthward in a pair of Wellington boots, and surmounted by a tall, stiff hat, which no mortal could have worn at sea in any wind under heaven; nevertheless, a glimpse of his sagacious, weather-beaten face, or his strong, brown hand, would have established the captain's calling. Whereas Mr. Pettifer — a man of a certain plump neatness, with a curly whisker, and elaborately nautical in a jacket, and shoes, and all things correspondent — looked no more like a seaman, beside Captain Jorgan, than he looked like a sea-serpent.

The two climbed high up the village, — which had the most arbitrary turns and twists in it, so that the cobbler's house came dead across the ladder, and to have held a reasonable course, you must have gone through his house, and through him, too, as he sat at his work between two little windows, with one eye microscopically on the geological formation of that part of Devonshire, and the other telescopically on the open sea, — the two climbed high up the village, and stopped before a quaint little house, on which was painted, "MRS. RAYBROCK, DRAPER;" and also "POST OFFICE." Before it ran a rill of murmuring water, and access to it was gained by a little plank-bridge.

"Here's the name," said Captain Jorgan, "sure enough. You can come in if you like, Tom."

The captain opened the door, and passed into an odd little shop, about six feet high, with a great variety of beams and bumps in the ceiling, and, besides the principal window giving on the ladder of stones, a purblind little window of a single pane of glass, peeping out of an abutting corner at the sun-lighted ocean, and winking at its brightness.

"How do you do, ma'am?" said the captain. "I am very glad to see you. I have come a long way to see you."

"*Have* you, sir? Then I am sure I am very glad to see *you*, though I don't know you from Adam."

Thus a comely, elderly woman, short of statu[illegible]f form, sparkling and dark of eye, who, perfectly clean [illegible]t herself, stood in the midst of her perfectly clean and neat arrangements, and surveyed Captain Jorgan with smiling curiosity. "Ah! but you are a sailor, sir," she added almost immediately, and with a slight movement of her hands that was not very unlike wringing them; "then you are heartily welcome."

"Thankee, ma'am," said the captain, "I don't know what it is, I am sure, that brings out the salt in me, but everybody seems to see it on the crown of my hat and the collar of my coat. Yes, ma'am, I am in that way of life."

"And the other gentleman, too," said Mrs. Raybrock.

"Well, now, ma'am," said the captain, glancing shrewdly at the other gentleman, "you are that nigh right that he goes to sea, — if that makes him a sailor. This is my steward, ma'am, Tom Pettifer; he 's been a'most all trades you could name, in the course of his life, — would have bought all your chairs and tables once, if you had wished to sell 'em, — but now he 's my steward. My name 's Jorgan, and I 'm a ship-owner, and I sail my own and my partners' ships, and have done so this five-and-twenty year. According to custom I am called Captain Jorgan, but I am no more a captain, bless your heart! than you are."

"Perhaps you 'll come into my parlour, sir, and take a chair?" said Mrs. Raybrock.

"Ex-actly what I was going to propose myself, ma'am. After you."

Thus replying, and enjoining Tom to give an eye to the shop, Captain Jorgan followed Mrs. Raybrock into the little low back room, — decorated with divers plants in pots, tea-trays, old china teapots, and punch bowls, — which was at once the private sitting-room of the Raybrock family and the inner cabinet of the Post Office of the village of Steepways.

"Now, ma'am," said the captain, "it don't signify a cent to you where I was born, except — " But here the shadow of some one entering fell upon the captain's figure, and he broke off to double himself up, slap both his legs, and ejaculate, "Never knew such a thing in all my life! Here he is again! How are you?"

These words referred to the young fellow who had so taken Captain Jorgan's fancy down at the pier. To make it all quite

complete, he came in accompanied by the sweetheart whom the captain had detected looking over the wall. A prettier sweetheart the sun could not have shone upon that shining day. As she stood before the captain, with her rosy lips just parted in surprise, her brown eyes a little wider open than was usual from the same cause, and her breathing a little quickened by the ascent (and possibly by some mysterious hurry and flurry at the parlour door, in which the captain had observed her face to be for a moment totally eclipsed by the sou'-wester hat), she looked so charming that the captain felt himself under a moral obligation to slap both his legs again. She was very simply dressed, with no other ornament than an autumnal flower in her bosom. She wore neither hat nor bonnet, but merely a scarf or kerchief, folded squarely back over the head, to keep the sun off, — according to a fashion that may be sometimes seen in the more genial parts of England as well as of Italy, and which is probably the first fashion of head-dress that came into the world when grasses and leaves went out.

"In my country," said the captain, rising to give her his chair, and dexterously sliding it close to another chair on which the young fisherman must necessarily establish himself, — "in my country we should call Devonshire beauty first-rate!"

Whenever a frank manner is offensive, it is because it is strained or feigned; for there may be quite as much self-love and affectation in plainness as in mincing nicety. All that the captain said and did was honestly according to his nature, and his nature was open nature and good nature; therefore, when he paid this little compliment, and expressed with a sparkle or two of his knowing eye, "I see how it is, and nothing could be better," he had established a delicate confidence on that subject with the family.

"I was saying to your worthy mother," said the captain to the young man, after again introducing himself by name and occupation, — "I was saying to your mother (and you're very like her) that it didn't signify where I was born, except that I was raised on question-asking ground, where the babies, as soon as ever they come into the world, inquire of their mothers, 'Neow, how old may you be, and wa'at air you a goin' to name me?' — which is a fact." Here he slapped his leg. "Such being the case, I may be excused for asking you if your name is Alfred?"

"Yes, sir, my name is Alfred," returned the youn man.

"I am not a conjurer," pursued the captain, "and don't think me so, or I shall right soon undeceive you. Likewise don't think, if you please, though I *do* come from that country of the babies, that I am asking questions for question-asking's sake, for I am not. Somebody belonging to you went to sea?"

"My elder brother, Hugh," returned the young man. He said it in an altered and lower voice, and glanced at his mother, who raised her hands hurriedly, and put them together across her black gown, and looked eagerly at the visitor.

"No! For God's sake, don't think that!" said the captain, in a solemn way; "I bring no good tidings of him."

There was a silence, and the mother turned her face to the fire, and put her hand between it and her eyes. The young fisherman slightly motioned towards the window, and the captain, looking in that direction, saw a young widow, sitting at a neighbouring window across a little garden, engaged in needlework, with a young child sleeping on her bosom. The silence continued until the captain asked of Alfred:—

"How long is it since it happened?"

"He shipped for his last voyage better than three years ago."

"Ship struck upon some reef or rock, as I take it," said the captain, "and all hands lost."

"Yes."

"Wa'al!" said the captain, after a shorter silence. "Here I sit who may come to the same end, like enough. He holds the seas in the hollow of His hand. We must all strike somewhere and go down. Our comfort, then, for ourselves and one another, is to have done our duty. I'd wager your brother did his!"

"He did!" answered the young fisherman. "If ever man strove faithfully on all occasions to do his duty, my brother did. My brother was not a quick man (anything but that), but he was a faithful, true, and just man. We were the sons of only a small tradesman in this county, sir; yet our father was as watchful of his good name as if he had been a king."

"A precious sight more so, I hope,—bearing in mind the general run of that class of crittur," said the captain. "But I interrupt."

"My brother considered that our father left the good name to us, to keep clear and true."

horns being worked up into toothpicks for the plantation overseers in my country, who may be seen (if you travel down South, or away West, fur enough) picking their teeth with 'em, while the whips, made of the tail, flog hard. In this last voyage, homeward-bound for Liverpool from South America, I say to you, my young friend, it blew. Whole measures! No half measures, nor making believe to blow! It blew! Now I warn't blown clean out of the water into the sky, — though I expected to be even that, — but I was blown clean out of my course; and when at last it fell calm, it fell dead calm, and a strong current set one way, day and night, night and day, and I drifted — drifted — drifted — out of all the ordinary tracks and courses of ships, and drifted yet, and yet drifted! It behoves a man who takes charge of fellow-critters' lives never to rest from making himself master of his calling. I never did rest, and consequently I knew pretty well ('specially looking over the side in the dead calm of that strong current) what dangers to expect, and what precautions to take against 'em. In short, we were driving head on to an island. There was no island in the chart, and, therefore, you may say it was ill manners in the island to be there; I don't dispute its bad breeding, but there it was. Thanks be to Heaven, I was as ready for the island as the island was ready for me. I made it out myself from the mast-head, and I got enough way upon her in good time to keep her off. I ordered a boat to be lowered and manned, and went in that boat myself to explore the island. There was a reef outside it, and, floating in a corner of the smooth water within the reef, was a heap of seaweed, and entangled in that seaweed was this bottle."

Here the captain took his hand from the bottle for a moment, that the young fisherman might direct a wondering glance at it; and then replaced his hand and went on: —

"If ever you come — or even if ever you don't come — to a desert place, use your eyes and your spy-glass well; for the smallest thing you see may prove of use to you, and may have some information or some warning in it. That's the principle on which I came to see this bottle. I picked up the bottle and ran the boat alongside the island, and made fast and went ashore armed, with a part of my boat's crew. We found that every scrap of vegetation on the island (I give it you as my opinion, but scant and scrubby at the best of times) had been consumed

by fire. As we were making our way, cautiously and over the pulverised embers, one of my people sa earth breast high. He turned pale, and 'Haul me shipmates,' says he, 'for my feet are among bones.' got him on his legs again, and then we dug up the spot, and we found that the man was right, and that his feet had been among bones. More than that, they were human bones; though whether the remains of one man, or of two or three men, what with calcination and ashes, and what with a poor practical knowledge of anatomy, I can't undertake to say. We examined the whole island, and made out nothing else, save and except that, from its opposite side, I sighted a considerable tract of land, which land I was able to identify, and according to the bearings of which (not to trouble you with my log) I took a fresh departure. When I got aboard again I opened the bottle, which was oil-skin covered as you see, and glass-stoppered as you see. Inside of it," pursued the captain, suiting his action to his words, "I found this little crumpled, folded paper, just as you see. Outside of it was written, as you see, these words: '*Whoever finds this is solemnly entreated by the dead to convey it unread to Alfred Raybrock, Steepways, North Devon, England.*' A sacred charge," said the captain, concluding his narrative, "and, Alfred Raybrock, there it is!"

"This is my poor brother's writing!"

"I suppose so," said Captain Jorgan. "I 'll take a look out of this little window while you read it."

"Pray no, sir! I should be hurt. My brother could n't know it would fall into such hands as yours."

The captain sat down again on the foot of the bed, and the young man opened the folded paper with a trembling hand, and spread it on the table. The ragged paper, evidently creased and torn both before and after being written on, was much blotted and stained, and the ink had faded and run, and many words were wanting. What the captain and the young fisherman made out together, after much re-reading, and much humouring of the folds of the paper, is given on this page. [Page 238.]

The young fisherman had become more and more agitated as the writing had become clearer to him. He now left it lying before the captain, over whose shoulder he had been reading it, and, dropping into his former seat, leaned forward on the table and laid his face in his hands.

"What, man," urged the captain, "don't give in! Be up and doing *like* a man!"

"It is selfish, I know, — but doing what, doing what?" cried the young fisherman, in complete despair, and stamping his sea-boot on the ground.

"Doing what?" returned the captain. "Something! I'd go down to the little breakwater below yonder, and take a wrench at one of the salt-rusted iron rings there, and either wrench it up by the roots or wrench my teeth out of my head,

sooner than I'd do nothing. Nothing!" ejaculated the captain. "Any fool or faint-heart can do *that*, and nothing can come of nothing, — which was pretended to be found out, I believe, by one of them Latin critters," said the captain, with the deepest disdain; "as if Adam had n't found it out, afore ever he so much as named the beasts!"

Yet the captain saw, in spite of his bold words, that there was some greater reason than he yet understood for the young man's distress. And he eyed him with a sympathising curiosity.

“Come, come!” continued the captain. “Speak is it, boy?”

“You have seen how beautiful she is, sir,” sai man, looking up for the moment, with a flushe rumpled hair.

“Did any man ever say she warn't beautiful?” captain. “If so, go and lick him.”

The young man laughed fretfully in spite of himself, and sa

“It 's not that, it 's not that.”

“Wa'al then, what is it?” said the captain, in a more soothing tone.

The young fisherman mournfully composed himself to tell the captain what it was, and began: “We were to have been married next Monday week —”

“Were to have been!” interrupted Captain Jorgan. “And are to be? Hey?”

Young Raybrock shook his head, and traced out with his forefinger the words, “*Poor father's five hundred pounds,*” in the written paper.”

“Go along,” said the captain. “Five hundred pounds? Yes?”

“That sum of money,” pursued the young fisherman, entering with the greatest earnestness on his demonstration, while the captain eyed him with equal earnestness, “was all my late father possessed. When he died he owed no man more than he left means to pay, but he had been able to lay by only five hundred pounds.”

“Five hundred pounds,” repeated the captain. “Yes?”

“In his lifetime, years before, he had expressly laid the money aside to leave to my mother, — like to settle upon her, if I make myself understood.”

“Yes?”

“He had risked it once — my father put down in writing at that time, respecting the money — and was resolved never to risk it again.”

“Not a spec'lator,” said the captain. “My country would n't have suited him. Yes?”

“My mother has never touched the money till now. And now it was to have been laid out this very next week, in buying me a handsome share in our neighbouring fishery here, to settle me in life with Kitty.”

The captain's face fell, and he passed and repassed [illegible] sunbrowned right hand over his thin hair in a [illegible] manner.

"Kitty's father has no more than enough to live on, eve[n in] the sparing way in which we live about here. He is a k[ind of] bailiff or steward of manor rights here, and they are [illegible] and it is but a poor little office. He was better off [illegible] Kitty must never marry to mere drudgery and hard living."

The captain still sat stroking his thin hair, and [illegible] the young fisherman.

"I am as certain that my father had no knowledge that [any] one was wronged as to this money, or that any restitution [was] to be made, as I am certain that the sun now shines [illegible] after this solemn warning from my brother's grave [illegible] that the money is Stolen Money," said Young Raybrock, [illegible] himself to the utterance of the words, "can I doubt it [illegible] I touch it?"

[illegible]

Most like, you 'll go to this village named here ?" … tain, musing, with his finger on the name.

"Yes! And Mr. Tregarthen is a Cornishman, and — to … sure! — comes from Lanrean."

"Does he ?" said the captain quietly. "As I ain't acquainted with him, who may *he* be ?"

"Mr. Tregarthen is Kitty's father."

"Ay, ay!" cried the captain. "Now you speak! Tregarthen knows this village of Lanrean, then ?"

"Beyond all doubt he does. I have often heard him mention it, as being his native place. He knows it well."

"Stop half a moment," said the captain. "We want a name here. You could ask Tregarthen (or, if you could n't, I could) what names of old men he remembers in his time in those diggings ? Hey ?"

"I can go straight to his cottage, and ask him now."

"Take me with you," said the captain, rising in a solid way that had a most comfortable reliability in it, "and just a word more first. I have knocked about harder than you, and have got along further than you. I have had, all my sea-going life long, to keep my wits polished bright with acid and friction, like the brass cases of the ship's instruments. I 'll keep you company on this expedition. Now you don't live by talking any more than I do. Clench that hand of yours in this hand of mine, and that 's a speech on both sides."

Captain Jorgan took command of the expedition with that hearty shake. He at once refolded the paper exactly as before, replaced it in the bottle, put the stopper in, put the oil-skin over the stopper, confided the whole to Young Raybrock's keeping, and led the way down stairs.

But it was harder navigation below stairs than above. The instant they set foot in the parlour the quick, womanly eye detected that there was something wrong. Kitty exclaimed, frightened, as she ran to her lover's side, "Alfred! What 's the matter ?" Mrs. Raybrock cried out to the captain, "Gracious! what have you done to my son to change him like this all in a minute ?" And the young widow — who was there with her work upon her arm — was at first so agitated that she frightened the little girl she held in her hand, who hid her face in her mother's skirts and screamed. The captain, conscious of being held responsible for this domestic change, contemplated

it with quite a guilty expression of countenance, and looked to the young fisherman to come to his rescue.

"Kitty darling," said Young Raybrock, "Kitty, dearest love, I must go away to Lanrean, and I don't know where else or how much farther, this very day. Worse than that — our marriage, Kitty, must be put off, and I don't know for how long."

Kitty stared at him, in doubt and wonder and in anger, and pushed him from her with her hand.

"Put off?" cried Mrs. Raybrock. "The marriage put off? And you going to Lanrean! Why, in the name of the dear Lord?"

"Mother dear, I can't say why; I must not say why. It would be dishonourable and undutiful to say why."

"Dishonourable and undutiful?" returned the dame. "And is there nothing dishonourable or undutiful in the boy's breaking the heart of his own plighted love, and his mother's heart too, for the sake of the dark secrets and counsels of a wicked stranger? Why did you ever come here?" she apostrophised the innocent captain. "Who wanted you? Where did you come from? Why couldn't you rest in your own bad place, wherever it is, instead of disturbing the peace of quiet unoffending folk like us?"

"And what," sobbed the poor little Kitty, "have I ever done to you, you hard and cruel captain, that you should [illegible] and serve me so?"

And then they both began to weep most pitifully, while the captain could only look from the one to the other, and lay hold of himself by the coat-collar.

"Margaret," said the poor young fisherman, on his knees at Kitty's feet, while Kitty kept both her hands before her tearful face, to shut out the traitor from her view, — but kept her fingers wide asunder and looked at him all the time, — "Margaret, you have suffered so much, so uncomplainingly, and are always so careful and considerate! Do take my part, for poor Hugh's sake!"

The quiet Margaret was not appealed to in vain. "I [illegible] Alfred," she returned, "and I do. I wish this gentleman had never come near us;" whereupon the captain laid hold of himself the tighter; "but I take your part for all that. I am sure you have some strong reason and some sufficient reason for

what you do, strange as it is, and even for not say[illegible] do it, strange as that is. And, Kitty darling, you [illegible] think so more than any one, for true love believe[illegible] and bears everything, and trusts everything. [illegible] dear, you are bound to think so too, for you kn[illegible] you been blessed with good sons, whose word was always as go[illegible] their oath, and who were brought up in as true a sense of hon[illegible] as any gentleman in this land. And I am sure you have [illegible] more call, mother, to doubt your living son than to doubt y[illegible] dead son; and, for the sake of the dear dead, I stand up [illegible] the dear living."

"Wa'al now," the captain struck in with enthusiasm, "[illegible] I say, That whether your opinions flatter me or not, you are a young woman of sense, and spirit and feeling; and I'd sooner have you by my side, in the hour of danger, than a good half of the men I've ever fallen in with — or fallen out with, ayther."

Margaret did not return the captain's compliment, or appear fully to reciprocate his good opinion, but she applied herself to the consolation of Kitty, and of Kitty's mother-in-law that was to have been next Monday week, and soon restored the parlour to a quiet condition.

"Kitty, my darling," said the young fisherman, "I must go to your father to entreat him still to trust me in spite of this wretched change and mystery, and to ask him for some directions concerning Laureate. Will you come home? Will you come with me, Kitty?"

Kitty answered not a word, but rose [illegible] with the end of her simple head-dress at her eyes. [illegible]

"Here, Tom!" said the captain [illegible]

[illegible]

"Though [illegible]

it 'll soon be over, or that most people is so at first, or that it 'll do her good afterward, I cannot imaginate!" was the captain's reflection as he followed the lovers.

He had not far to follow them, since it was but a short descent down the stony ways to the cottage of Kitty's father. But short as the distance was, it was long enough to enable the captain to observe that he was fast becoming the village Ogre; for there was not a woman standing working at her door, or a fisherman coming up or going down, who saw Young Raybrock unhappy and little Kitty in tears, but he or she instantly darted a suspicious and indignant glance at the captain, as the foreigner who must somehow be responsible for this unusual spectacle. Consequently, when they came into Tregarthen's little garden, — which formed the platform from which the captain had seen Kitty peeping over the wall, — the captain brought to, and stood off and on at the gate, while Kitty hurried to hide her tears in her own room, and Alfred spoke with her father, who was working in the garden. He was a rather infirm man, but could scarcely be called old yet, with an agreeable face and a promising air of making the best of things. The conversation began on his side with great cheerfulness and good-humour, but soon became distrustful, and soon angry. That was the captain's cue for striking both into the conversation and the garden.

"Morning, sir!" said Captain Jorgan. "How do you do?"

"The gentleman I am going away with," said the young fisherman to Tregarthen.

"Oh!" returned Kitty's father, surveying the unfortunate captain with a look of extreme disfavour. "I confess that I can't say I am glad to see you."

"No," said the captain; "and, to admit the truth, that seems to be the general opinion in these parts. But don't be hasty; you may think better of me by and by."

"I hope so," observed Tregarthen.

"Wa'al, *I* hope so," observed the captain, quite at his ease; "more than that, I believe so, — though you don't. Now, Mr. Tregarthen, you don't want to exchange words of mistrust with me; and if you did, you could n't, because I would n't. You and I are old enough to know better than to judge against experience from surfaces and appearances; and if you have n't lived

to find out the evil and injustice of such judgment [illegible] are a lucky man."

The other seemed to shrink under this remark, and replied, "Sir, I *have* lived to feel it deeply."

"Wa'al," said the captain, mollified, "then I've made a good cast without knowing it. Now, Tregarthen, there stands the lover of your only child, and here stand I who know his secret. I warrant it a righteous secret, and none of his making, though bound to be of his keeping. I want to help him out with it, and tewwards that end we ask you to favour us with the names of two or three old residents in the village of Lanrean. As I am taking out my pocket-book and pencil to put the names down, I may as well observe to you that this, wrote atop of the first page here, is my name and address: 'Silas Jonas Jorgan, Salem, Massachusetts, United States.' If ever you take it in your head to run over any morning, I shall be glad to welcome you. Now, what may be the spelling of these said names?"

"There was an elderly man," said Tregarthen, "named David Polreath. He may be dead."

"Wa'al," said the captain cheerfully, "if Polreath 's dead and buried, and can be made of any service to us, Polreath won't object to our digging of him up. Polreath 's down, anyhow."

"There was another named Penrewen. I don't know his Christian name."

"Never mind his Chris'en name," said the captain. "Penrewen, for short."

"There was another named John Tredgear."

"And a pleasant sounding name, too," said the captain; "John Tredgear 's booked."

"I can recall no other except old Parvis."

"One of old Parvis's fam'ly I reckon," said the captain; "kept a dry-goods store in New York city, and realised a handsome competency by burning his house to ashes. Same name, anyhow. David Polreath, Unchris'en Penrewen, John Tredgear, and old Arson Parvis."

"I cannot recall any others at the moment."

"Thankee," said the captain. "And so, Tregarthen, hoping for your good opinion yet, and likewise for the fair Devonshire Flower's, your daughter's, I give you my hand, sir, and wish you good day."

Young Raybrock accompanied him disconsolately; for there

his birth to that hour, he had it then. And presently up and spoke the two brothers, one at a time, two at a time, two dozen at a time for the bewilderment into which they plunged the captain, until he gradually had Hugh Raybrock's deliverance made clear to him, and also unravelled the fact that the person referred to in the half-obliterated paper was Tregarthen himself.

"Formerly, dear Captain Jorgan," said Alfred, "of Lanrean, you recollect? Kitty and her father came to live at Steepways after Hugh shipped on his last voyage."

"Ay, ay!" cried the captain, fetching a breath. "*Now* you have me in tow. Then your brother here don't know his sister-in-law that is to be so much as by name?"

"Never saw her; never heard of her!"

"Ay, ay, ay!" cried the captain. "Why, then we every one go back together, — paper, writer, and all, — and take Tregarthen into the secret we kept from him?"

"Surely," said Alfred, "we can't help it now. We must go through with our duty."

"Not a doubt," returned the captain. "Give me an arm apiece, and let us set this ship-shape."

So walking up and down in the shrill wind on the wild moor, while the neglected breakfast cooled within, the captain and the brothers settled their course of action.

It was that they should all proceed by the quickest means they could secure to Barnstable, and there look over the father's books and papers in the lawyer's keeping; as Hugh had proposed to himself to do if ever he reached home. That, enlightened or unenlightened, they should then return to Steepways, and go straight to Mr. Tregarthen, and tell him all they knew, and see what came of it, and act accordingly. Lastly, that when they got there they should enter the village with all precautions against Hugh's being recognised by any chance; and that to the captain should be consigned the task of preparing his wife and mother for his restoration to this life.

"For you see," quoth Captain Jorgan, touching the last head, "it requires caution anyway, great joys being as dangerous as great griefs, if not more dangerous, as being more uncommon (and therefore less provided against), in this round world of ours. And besides, I should like to free my name with the ladies, and take you home again at your brightest and luckiest; so don't let 's throw away a chance of success."

The captain was highly lauded by the brothers interest and foresight.

"And now stop!" said the captain, coming to a stand and looking from one brother to the other, with quite a rigging of wrinkles about each eye; "you are of opinion," the elder, "that you are ra'ather slow?"

"I assure you I am very slow," said the honest Hugh.

"Wa'al," replied the captain, "I assure *you* that to the best of my belief I am ra'ather smart. Now, a slow man ain't good at quick business, is he?"

That was clear to both.

"You," said the captain, turning to the younger brother, "are a little in love; ain't you?"

"Not a little, Captain Jorgan."

"Much or little, you 're sort preoccupied; ain't you?"

It was impossible to be denied.

"And a sort preoccupied man ain't good at quick business, is he?" said the captain.

Equally clear on all sides.

"Now," said the captain, "I ain't in love myself, and I 've made many a smart run across the ocean, and I should like to carry on and go ahead with this affair of yours, and make a run slick through it. Shall I try? Will you hand it over to me?"

They were both delighted to do so, and thanked him heartily.

"Good," said the captain, taking out his watch. "This is half-past eight A. M., Friday morning. I 'll jot that down, and we 'll compute how many hours we 've been out when we run into your mother's Post Office. There! The entry 's made, and now we go ahead."

They went ahead so well that, before the Barnstable lawyer's office was open next morning, the captain was sitting whistling on the step of the door, waiting for the clerk to come down the street with his key and open it. But instead of the clerk there came the master, with whom the captain fraternised on the spot to an extent that utterly confounded him.

As he personally knew both Hugh and Alfred, there was n difficulty in obtaining immediate access to such of the fathe papers as were in his keeping. These were chiefly old lett and cash accounts; from which the captain, with a shrewdne

and despatch that left the lawyer far behind, established [illegible] perfect clearness, by noon, the following particulars:

That one Lawrence Clissold had borrowed of the deceased [illegible] a time when he was a thriving young tradesman in the [illegible] Barnstaple, the sum of five hundred pounds. That he borrowed it on the written statement that it was to be laid [illegible] in furtherance of a speculation which he expected would [illegible] him to independence; he being, at the time of writing [illegible] letter, no more than a clerk in the house of [illegible] thers, Austin [illegible] Square, London. That the money was [illegible] for a stipulated period; but that, when the term was [illegible] afterwards [illegible] failed, and Clissold was [illegible] of repayment. That, hereupon, he had written [illegible] in no very persuasive terms, vaguely requesting [illegible] That the creditor had refused this [illegible] he could [illegible] delay. That Clissold [illegible] accompanying the remittance of the money [illegible] letter, [illegible] having been [illegible]

[illegible]

pen and all, "I 'm glad to see you, sir. How do y I told you you'd think better of me by and by, and late you on going to do it."

Here the captain's eye fell on Tom Pettifer Ho, preparing some cookery at the fire.

"That critter," said the captain, smiting his leg, steward, and never ought to have been in any other Stop where you are, Tom, and make yourself use Tregarthen, I 'm going to try a chair."

Accordingly the captain drew one close to him, and went on: "This loving member of the Raybrock family you know, sir. This slow member of the same family you don't know, sir. Wa'al, these two are brothers, — fact! Hugh 's come to life again, and here he stands. Now see here, my friend! You don't want to be told that he was cast away, but you do want to be told (for there 's a purpose in it) that he was cast away with another man. That man by name was Lawrence Clissold."

At the mention of this name Tregarthen started and changed colour. "What 's the matter?" said the captain.

"He was a fellow-clerk of mine thirty — five-and-thirty — years ago."

"True," said the captain, immediately catching at the clue: "Dringworth Brothers, America Square, London City."

The other started again, nodded, and said, "That was the house."

"Now," pursued the captain, "between those two men cast away there arose a mystery concerning the round sum of five hundred pound."

Again Tregarthen started, changing colour. Again the captain said, "What 's the matter?"

As Tregarthen only answered, "Please to go on," the captain recounted, very tersely and plainly, the nature of Clissold's wanderings on the barren island, as he had condensed them in his mind from the seafaring man. Tregarthen became greatly agitated during this recital, and at length exclaimed: —

"Clissold was the man who ruined me! I have suspected it for many a long year, and now I know it."

"And how," said the captain, drawing his chair still closer to Tregarthen, and clapping his hand upon his shoulder, — "how may you know it?"

"When we were fellow-clerks," replied Tregarthen, "in that

[redacted]

London house, it was one of my duties to enter daily in a certain book an account of the sums received that day by the firm, and afterward paid into the banker's. One memorable day, — a Wednesday, the black day of my life, — among the sums I so entered was one of five hundred pounds."

"I begin to make it out," said the captain. "Yes!"

"It was one of Clissold's duties to copy from this entry a memorandum of the sums which the clerk employed to go to the banker's paid in there. It was my duty to hand the money to Clissold; it was Clissold's to hand it to the clerk, with the memorandum of his writing. On that Wednesday I entered a sum of five hundred pounds received. I handed that sum, as I handed the other sums in the day's entry, to Clissold. I was absolutely certain of it at the time; I have been absolutely certain of it ever since. A sum of five hundred pounds was afterward found by the house to have been that day wanting from the bag, from Clissold's memorandum, and from the entries in my book. [illegible]

[illegible]

have of course been sure; it has been at once my my trial. Of Clissold I have always had suspic amounting to certainty; but they have never been co until now. For my daughter's sake and for my owr carried this subject in my own heart, as the only secr life, and have long believed that it would die with me."

"Wa'al, my good sir," said the captain cordially, "the pr ent question is, and will be long, I hope, concerning living, a not dying. Now, here are our two honest friends, the loving Raybrock and the slow. Here they stand, agreed on one point, on which I 'd back 'em round the world, and right across it from north to south, and then again from east to west, and through it, from your deepest Cornish mine to China. It is, that they will never use this same so-often-mentioned sum of money, and that restitution of it must be made to you. These two, the loving member and the slow, for the sake of the right and of their father's memory, will have it ready for you to-morrow. Take it, and ease their minds and mine, and end a most unfort'-nate transaction."

Tregarthen took the captain by the hand, and gave his hand to each of the young men, but positively and finally answered No. He said, they trusted to his word, and he was glad of it, and at rest in his mind; but there was no proof, and the money must remain as it was. All were very earnest over this; and earnestness in men, when they are right and true, is so impressive, that Mr. Pettifer deserted his cookery and looked on quite moved.

"And so," said the captain, "so we come — as that lawyer-critter over yonder where we were this morning might — to mere proof; do we? We must have it; must we? How? From this Clissold's wanderings, and from what you say, it ain't hard to make out that there was a neat forgery of your writing committed by the too smart rowdy that was grease and ashes when I made his acquaintance, and a substitution of a forged leaf in your book for a real and true leaf torn out. Now, was that real and true leaf then and there destroyed? No, — for says he, in his drunken way, he slipped it into a crack in his own desk, because you came into the there was time to burn it, and could never get wards. Wait a bit. Where is that desk consider it likely to be in America Square, Lo

Tregarthen shook his head.

"The house has not, for years, transacted business in that place. I have heard of it, and read of it, as removed, enlarged, every way altered. Things alter so fast in these times."

"You think so," returned the captain, with compassion, "but you should come over and see *me* afore you talk about *that*. Wa'al now. This desk, this paper, — this paper, this desk," said the captain, ruminating and walking about, and looking, in his uneasy abstraction, into Mr. Pettifer's hat on a table, among other things. "This desk, this paper, — this paper, this desk," the captain continued, musing and roaming about the room, "I 'd give — "

However, he gave nothing, but took up his steward's hat instead, and stood looking into it, as if he had just come into church. After that he roamed again, and again said, "This desk, belonging to this house of Dringworth Brothers, America Square, London City — "

Mr. Pettifer, still strangely moved, and now more moved than before, cut the captain off as he backed across the room, and bespake him thus: —

"Captain Jorgan, I have been wishful to engage your attention, but I could n't do it. I am unwilling to interrupt Captain Jorgan, but I must do it. *I* know something about that house."

The captain stood stock-still, and looked at him, — with his (Mr. Pettifer's) hat under his arm.

"You 're aware," pursued his steward, "that I was once in the broking business, Captain Jorgan?"

"I was aware," said the captain, "that you had failed in that calling, and in half the businesses going, Tom."

"Not quite so, Captain Jorgan; but I failed in the broking business. I was partners with my brother, sir. There was a sale of old office furniture at Dringworth Brothers' when the house was moved from America Square, and me and my brother made what we call in the trade a Deal there, sir. And I 'll make bold to say, sir, that the only thing I ever had from my brother, or from any relation, — for my relations have mostly taken property from me instead of giving me any, — was an old desk we bought at that same sale, with a crack in it. My brother would n't have given me even that, when we [dissolved] partnership, if it had been worth anything."

"Where is that desk now?" said the captain.

"Well, Captain Jorgan," replied the steward, "I could n't say for certain where it is now; but when I saw it last,—which was last time we were outward bound,—it was at a very nice lady's at Wapping, along with a little chest of mine which was detained for a small matter of a bill owing."

The captain, instead of paying that rapt attention to his steward which was rendered by the other three persons present, went to church again, in respect of the steward's hat. And a most especially agitated and memorable face the captain produced from it, after a short pause.

"Now, Tom," said the captain, "I spoke to you, when we first came here, respecting your constitutional weakness on the subject of sunstroke."

"You did, sir."

"Will my slow friend," said the captain, "lend me his arm, or I shall sink right back'ards into this blessed steward's cookery? Now, Tom," pursued the captain, when the required assistance was given, "on your oath as a steward, did n't you take that desk to pieces to make a better one of it, and put it together fresh,—or something of the kind?"

"On my oath I did, sir," replied the steward.

"And by the blessing of Heaven, my friends, one and all," cried the captain, radiant with joy,—"of the Heaven that put it into this Tom Pettifer's head to take so much care of his head against the bright sun,—he lined his hat with the original leaf in Tregarthen's writing,—and here it is!"

With that the captain, to the utter destruction of Mr. Pettifer's favourite hat, produced the book-leaf, very much worn, but still legible, and gave both his legs such tremendous slaps that they were heard far off in the bay, and never accounted for.

"A quarter past five P. M.," said the captain, pulling out his watch, "and that's thirty-three hours and a quarter in all, and a pritty run!"

How they were all overpowered with delight and triumph; how the money was restored, then and there, to Tregarthen; how Tregarthen, then and there, gave it all to his daughter; how the captain undertook to go to Dringworth Brothers and re-establish the reputation of their forgotten old clerk; how Kitty came in, and was nearly torn to pieces, and the marriage

[redacted]

was reappointed, needs not to be told. Nor how she [illegible] the young fisherman went home to the Post Office to [illegible] the way for the captain's coming, by declaring him to be [illegible] mightiest of men, who had made all their fortunes, [illegible] dutifully withdrew together, in order that he might have [illegible] domestic coast entirely to himself. How he availed himself [illegible] it is all that remains to tell.

Deeply delighted with his trust, and putting his heart [illegible] he raised the latch of the Post Office parlour where Mrs Raybrock and the young widow sat, and said: —

"May I come in?"

"Sure you may, Captain Jorgan!" replied the [illegible] "And good reason you have to be free of the house, [illegible] you have not been too well used in it by some who [illegible] have known better. I ask your pardon."

"No, you don't, ma'am," said the captain, "for I [illegible] you. Wal'l, to be sure!"

By this time he had taken a chair on the hearth [illegible] them.

[illegible]

abandoned." Here the captain musingly went song: —

"'Silas Jorgan
Played the organ;'"

repeating it with his eyes on the fire, as he softly danced child on his knee. For he felt that Margaret had stopped work-

"Yes," said the captain, still looking at the fire. "I m up stories, and tell 'em to that child. Stories of shipwreck desert islands, and long delay in getting back to civilised la It is to stories the like of that, mostly, that

'Silas Jorgan
Plays the organ.'"

There was no light in the room but the light of the fire; for the shades of night were on the village, and the stars had begun to peep out of the sky one by one, as the houses of the village peeped out from among the foliage when the night departed. The captain felt that Margaret's eyes were upon him, and thought it discreetest to keep his own eyes on the fire.

"Yes; I make 'em up," said the captain. "I make up stories of brothers brought together by the good providence of GOD, — of sons brought back to mothers, husbands brought back to wives, fathers raised from the deep, for little children like herself."

Margaret's touch was on his arm, and he could not choose but look round now. Next moment her hand moved imploringly to his breast, and she was on her knees before him, — supporting the mother, who was also kneeling.

"What's the matter?" said the captain. "What's the matter?

'Silas Jorgan
Played the — '"

Their looks and tears were too much for him, and he could not finish the song, short as it was.

"Mistress Margaret, you have borne ill fortune well. Could you bear good fortune equally well, if it was to come?"

"I hope so. I thankfully and humbly and earnestly hope so!"

"Wa'al, my dear," said the captain, "p'r'aps it has come. He's — don't be frightened — shall I say the word — "

"Alive?"

"Yes!"

The thanks they fervently addressed to Heaven were [illegible] too much for the captain, who openly took [illegible] chief and dried his eyes.

"He's no further off," resumed the captain, [illegible] country. Indeed, he's no further off than [illegible] country. To tell you the truth, he's no f[illegible] mouth. Indeed, I doubt if he's quite so far. [illegible] was sure you could bear it nicely, and I was to [illegible] whistle for him — —"

The captain's trust was discharged. A rush came, [illegible] were all together again.

This was a fine opportunity for Tom Pettifer to [illegible] a tumbler of cold water, and he presently appeared [illegible] administered it to the ladies; at the same time [illegible] composing their dresses, exactly as if they had been [illegible] crossing the Channel. The extent to which [illegible] his legs, when Mr Pettifer acquitted himself [illegible]

[illegible]

TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND[1]

I

PICKING UP SOOT AND CINDERS

"AND why Tom Tiddler's ground?" asked the Traveller.

"Because he scatters halfpence to Tramps and such-like," returned the Landlord, "and of course they pick 'em up. And this being done on his own land (which it *is* his own land, you observe, and were his family's before him), why it is but regarding the halfpence as gold and silver, and turning the ownership of the property a bit round your finger, and there you have the name of the children's game complete. And it's appropriate, too," said the Landlord, with his favourite action of stooping a little, to look across the table out of window at vacancy, under the window-blind, which was half drawn down. "Leastwise it has been so considered by many gentlemen which have partook of chops and tea in the present humble parlour."

The Traveller was partaking of chops and tea in the present humble parlour, and the Landlord's shot was fired obliquely at him.

"And you call him a Hermit?" said the Traveller.

"They call him such," returned the Landlord, evading personal responsibility; "he is in general so considered."

"What *is* a Hermit?" asked the Traveller.

"What is it?" repeated the Landlord, drawing his hand across his chin.

"Yes, what is it?"

The Landlord stooped again, to get a more comprehensive view of vacancy under the window-blind, and — with an asphyxiated appearance on him as one unaccustomed to definition — made no answer.

[1] The original has seven chapters, but those not printed here were not written by Mr. Dickens.

"I'll tell you what I suppose it to be," said the Traveller. "An abominably dirty thing."

"Mr. Mopes is dirty, it cannot be denied," said the Landlord.

"Intolerably conceited."

"Mr. Mopes is vain of the life he leads, some do say," replied the Landlord, as another concession.

"A slothful, unsavoury, nasty reversal of the laws of human nature," said the Traveller; "and for the sake of God's working world and its wholesomeness, both moral and physical, I would put the thing on the treadmill (if I had my way) wherever I found it; whether on a pillar or in a hole; whether on Tom Tiddler's ground, or the Pope of Rome's ground, or a Hindoo fakeer's ground, or any other ground."

"I don't know about putting Mr. Mopes on the treadmill," said the Landlord, shaking his head very seriously. "There ain't a doubt but what he has got landed property."

"How far may it be to this said Tom Tiddler's ground?" asked the Traveller.

"Put it at five mile," returned the Landlord.

"Well! When I have done my breakfast," said the Traveller, "I'll go there. I came over here this morning to find it out and see it."

"Many does," observed the Landlord.

The conversation passed, in the midsummer weather of a remote year of grace, down among the pleasant dales and trout streams of a green English county. No matter what county. Enough that you may hunt there, shoot there, fish there, traverse long grass-grown Roman roads there, open ancient barrows there, see many a square mile of richly cultivated land there, and hold Arcadian talk with a bold peasantry, their country's pride, who will tell you (if you want to know) how pastoral housekeeping is done on nine shillings a week.

Mr. Traveller sat at his breakfast in the little sanded parlour of the Peal of Bells village alehouse, with the dew and dust of an early walk upon his shoes—an early walk by road and meadow and coppice, that had sprinkled him bountifully with little blades of grass, and scraps of new hay, and with leaves both young and old, and with other such fragrant tokens of the freshness and wealth of summer. The window through which the Landlord had concentrated his gaze upon vacancy was shaded, because the morning sun was hot and bright on the

street. The village street was like most oth — wide for its height, silent for its size, and u llest degree. The quietest little dwellings of window shutters (to shut up Nothing as caref ere the Mint, or the Bank of England) had called 's house so suddenly, that his brass door-plate and stood among them as conspicuous and different a himself in his broadcloth among the smock-frocks of n s. The village residences seemed to have gone to t similar absence of consideration, for a score of wea ath-and-plaster cabins clung in confusion about the Attor- ed brick house, which, with glaring door-steps and a most scraper, seemed to serve all manner of ejectments upon They were as various as labourers — high-shouldered, cked, one-eyed, goggle-eyed, squinting, bow-legged, knock- rheumatic, crazy. Some of the small tradesmen's houses, s the crockery-shop and the harness-maker's, had a Cyclops w in the middle of the gable, within an inch or two of its suggesting that some forlorn rural 'Prentice must wriggle f into that apartment horizontally, when he retired to fter the manner of the worm. So bountiful in its abun- was the surrounding country, and so lean and scant the , that one might have thought the village had sown and d everything it once possessed, to convert the same into This would account for the bareness of the little shops, reness of the few boards and trestles designed for market es in a corner of the street, the bareness of the obsolete d Inn Yard, with the ominous inscription "Excise Office," t faded out from the gateway, as indicating the very last that poverty could get rid of. This would also account e determined abandonment of the village by one stray ist lessening in the perspective where the white posts and nd were, and would explain his conduct on the hypothesis e was going (through the act of suicide) to convert himself nanure, and become a part proprietor in turnips or man- urzel.

Traveller, having finished his breakfast and paid his ate score, walked out to the threshold of the Peal of and, thence directed by the pointing finger of his host, himself towards the ruined hermitage of Mr. Mopes the it.

[illegible]

[illegible] years, twelve [illegible] the whole, appeared the [illegible]

[illegible] "At any rate, let us [illegible]

[illegible] and on, and on, [illegible]

[illegible] by-road, which [illegible]

d waste as completely as if he had been born an Emperor Conqueror. Its centre object was a dwelling-house, suffi- substantial, all the window glass of which had been long olished by the surprising genius of Mopes, and all the rs of which were barred across with rough-split logs of ailed over them on the outside. A rick-yard, hip high in le rankness and ruin, contained out-buildings, from which tch had lightly fluttered away, on all the winds of all sons of the year, and from which the planks and beams avily dropped and rotted. The frosts and damps of and the heats of summer, had warped what wreck ed, so that not a post or a board retained the position meant to hold, but everything was twisted from its e, like its owner, and degraded and debased. In this ead of the sluggard, behind the ruined hedge, and sink- ly among the ruined grass and the nettles, were the last ng fragments of certain ricks: which had gradually mil- and collapsed, until they looked like mounds of rotten omb, or dirty sponge. Tom Tiddler's ground could even s ruined water; for there was a slimy pond into which or two had fallen — one soppy trunk and branches lay it then — which in its accumulation of stagnant weed, its black decomposition, and in all its foulness and filth, most comforting, regarded as the only water that could flected the shameful place without seeming polluted by w office.

Traveller looked all around him on Tom Tiddler's , and his glance at last encountered a dusty Tinker lying the weeds and rank grass, in the shade of the dwelling A rough walking-staff lay on the ground by his side, head rested on a small wallet. He met Mr. Traveller hout lifting up his head, merely depressing his chin a or he was lying on his back) to get a better view of him od day!" said Mr. Traveller.

me to you, if you like it," returned the Tinker

n't *you* like it? It 's a very fine day."

in't partickler in weather," returned the Tinker, with a

Traveller had walked up to where he lay, and was down at him. "This is a curious place," said Mr. ler.

"Ay, I suppose so!" returned the Tinker. "Tom Tiddler's ground they call this."

"Are you well acquainted with it?"

"Never saw it afore to-day," said the Tinker, with another yawn, "and don't care if I never see it again. There was a man here just now told me what it was called. If you want to see Tom himself, you must go in at that gate." He faintly indicated with his chin a little mean ruin of a wooden gate at the side of the house.

"Have you seen Tom?"

"No, and I ain't partickler to see him. I can see a dirty man anywhere."

"He does not live in the house, then?" said Mr. Traveller, casting his eyes upon the house anew.

"The man said," returned the Tinker rather irritably,—"him as was here just now,—'This what you 're a lying on, mate, is Tom Tiddler's ground. And if you want to see Tom,' he says, 'you must go in at that gate.' The man come out of that gate himself, and he ought to know."

"Certainly," said Mr. Traveller.

"Though, perhaps," exclaimed the Tinker, so struck by the brightness of his own idea, that it had the electric effect upon him of causing him to lift up his head an inch or so, "perhaps he was a liar! He told some rum 'uns—him as was here just now did about this place of Tom's. He says—him as was here just now—'When Tom shut up the house, mate, to go to rack, the beds was left, all made, like as if somebody was a going to sleep in every bed. And if you was to walk through the bedrooms now, you 'd see the ragged mouldy bedclothes a heaving and a heaving like seas. And a heaving and a heaving with what?' he says. 'Why, with the rats under 'em.'"

"I wish I had seen that man," Mr. Traveller remarked.

"You 'd have been welcome to see him instead of me seeing him," growled the Tinker; "for he was a long-winded one."

Not without a sense of injury in the remembrance, the Tinker gloomily closed his eyes. Mr. Traveller, deeming the Tinker a short-winded one, from whom no further breath of information was to be derived, betook himself to the gate.

Swung upon its rusty hinges, it admitted him into a yard in which there was nothing to be seen but an outhouse attached to the ruined building, with a barred window in it. As there

were traces of many recent footsteps under this wi
it was a low window, and unglazed, Mr. Travelle
to peep within the bars. And there to be sure h
live Hermit before him, and could judge how t
Hermits used to look.

He was lying on a bank of soot and cinders, on
front of a rusty fireplace. There was nothing else
little kitchen, or scullery, or whatever his den ha
nally used as, but a table with a litter of old bottl on it.
rat made a clatter among these bottles, jumped do and
over the real live Hermit on his way to his hole, o man
his hole would not have been so easily discernible. kled
the face by the rat's tail, the owner of Tom Tiddler's gro
opened his eyes, saw Mr. Traveller, started up, and sprang to the window.

"Humph!" thought Mr. Traveller, retiring a pace or two from the bars. "A compound of Newgate, Bedlam, a Debtor's Prison in the worst time, a chimney-sweep, a mud-lark, and the Noble Savage! A nice old family, the Hermit family. Hah!"

Mr. Traveller thought this, as he silently confronted the sooty object in the blanket and skewer (in sober truth it wore nothing else), with the matted hair and the staring eyes. Further, Mr. Traveller thought, as the eyes surveyed him with a very obvious curiosity in ascertaining the effect they produced, "Vanity, vanity, vanity! Verily, all is vanity!"

"What is your name, sir, and where do you come from?" asked Mr. Mopes the Hermit — with an air of authority, but in the ordinary human speech of one who has been to school.

Mr. Traveller answered the inquiries.

"Did you come here, sir, to see *me?*"

"I did. I heard of you, and I came to see you. I know you like to be seen." Mr. Traveller coolly threw the last words in, as a matter of course, to forestall an affectation of resentment or objection that he saw rising beneath the grease and grime of the face. They had their effect.

"So," said the Hermit, after a momentary silence, unclasping the bars by which he had previously held, and seating himself behind them on the ledge of the window, with his bare legs and feet crouched up, "you know I like to be seen?"

Mr. Traveller looked about him for something to sit on, and observing a billet of wood in a corner, brought it near th

[redacted]

window. Deliberately seating himself upon it, he answered, "Just so."

Each looked at the other, and each appeared to take some pains to get the measure of the other.

"Then you have come to ask me why I lead this life," said the Hermit, frowning in a stormy manner. "I never tell that to any human being. I will not be asked that."

"Certainly you will not be asked that by me," said Mr. Traveller, "for I have not the slightest desire to know."

"You are an uncouth man," said Mr. Mopes the Hermit.

"You are another," said Mr. Traveller.

The Hermit, who was plainly in the habit of overawing his visitors with the novelty of his filth and his blanket and skewer, glared at his present visitor in some discomfiture and surprise, as if he had taken aim at him with a sure gun and his piece had missed fire.

"Why do you come here at all?" he asked, after a pause.

"Upon my life!" said Mr. Traveller, "I was made to ask myself that very question only a few minutes ago—by a Tinker."

[illegible]

[illegible] said Mr. Traveller [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Mr. Traveller, glancing in after him [illegible] You had better come [illegible]

[illegible] said the Hermit, floundering round to get his [illegible]

"Then I will," said Mr. Traveller. "Why should you take it ill that I have no curiosity to know why you live this highly absurd and highly indecent life? When I contemplate a man in a state of disease, surely there is no moral obligation on me to be anxious to know how he took it."

After a short silence the Hermit bounced up again, and came back to the barred window.

"What! You are not gone?" he said, affecting to have supposed that he was.

"Nor going," Mr. Traveller replied; "I design to pass this summer day here."

"How dare you come, sir, upon my premises" — the Hermit was returning, when his visitor interrupted him.

"Really, you know, you must *not* talk about your premises. I cannot allow such a place as this to be dignified with the name of premises."

"How dare you," said the Hermit, shaking his bars, "come in at my gate, to taunt me with being in a diseased state?"

"Why, Lord bless my soul," returned the other very composedly, "you have not the face to say that you are in a wholesome state? Do allow me again to call your attention to your legs. Scrape yourself anywhere, — with anything, — and then tell me you are in a wholesome state. The fact is, Mr. Mopes, that you are not only a Nuisance — "

"A Nuisance?" repeated the Hermit fiercely.

"What is a place in this obscene state of dilapidation but a Nuisance? What is a man in your obscene state of dilapidation but a Nuisance? Then, as you very well know, you cannot do without an audience, and your audience is a Nuisance. You attract all the disreputable vagabonds and prowlers within ten miles round, by exhibiting yourself to them in that objectionable blanket, and by throwing copper money among them, and giving them drink out of those very dirty jars and bottles that I see in there (their stomachs need be strong!); and, in short," said Mr. Traveller, summing up in a quietly and comfortably settled manner, "you are a Nuisance, and this kennel is a Nuisance, and the audience that you cannot possibly dispense with is a Nuisance, and the Nuisance is not merely a local Nuisance, because it is a general Nuisance to know that there *can be* such a Nuisance left in civilisation so very long after its time."

"Will you go away? I have a gun in here," said the Hermit.

"Pooh!"

"I *have!*"

"Now I put it to you. Did I say you had not? And as to going away, didn't I say I am not going away? You have made me forget where I was. I now remember that I was remarking on your conduct being a Nuisance. Moreover, it is in the last and lowest degree inconsequent foolishness and weakness."

"Weakness?" echoed the Hermit.

"Weakness," said Mr. Traveller, with his former comfortably settled final air.

"I weak, you fool?" cried the Hermit, "I, who have held to my purpose, and my diet, and my only bed there, all these years?"

"The more the years, the weaker you," returned Mr. Traveller. "Though the years are not so many as folks say, and as you willingly take credit for. The crust upon your face is thick and dark, Mr. Mopes, but I can see enough of you through it to see that you are still a young man."

"Inconsequent foolishness is lunacy, I suppose?" said the Hermit.

"I suppose it is very like it," answered Mr. Traveller.

"Do I converse like a lunatic?"

"One of us two must have a strong presumption against him of being one, whether or no. Either the clean and decently clad man, or the dirty and indecorously clad man. I don't say which."

"Why, you self-sufficient bear," said the Hermit, "not a day passes but I am justified in my purpose by the conversations I hold here; not a day passes but I am shown, by everything I hear and see here, how right and strong I am in holding my purpose."

Mr. Traveller, lounging easily on his billet of wood, took out a pocket pipe, and began to fill it. "Now, that a man," he said, appealing to the summer sky as he did so, — "that a man — even behind bars, in a blanket and skewer — should tell me that he can see, from day to day, any orders or conditions of men, women, or children, who can by any possibility teach him that it is anything but the miserablest drivelling for a human

creature to quarrel with his social nature — not to go so far as to say, to renounce his common human decency, for that is an extreme case; or who can teach him that he can in anywise separate himself from his kind and the habits of his kind, without becoming a deteriorated spectacle calculated to give the Devil (and perhaps the monkeys) pleasure — is something wonderful! I repeat," said Mr. Traveller, beginning to smoke, "the unreasoning hardihood of it is something wonderful — even in a man with the dirt upon him an inch or two thick — behind bars — in a blanket and skewer!"

The Hermit looked at him irresolutely, and retired to his soot and cinders and lay down, and got up again and came to the bars, and again looked at him irresolutely, and finally said with sharpness: "I don't like tobacco."

"I don't like dirt," rejoined Mr. Traveller; "tobacco is an excellent disinfectant. We shall both be the better for my pipe. It is my intention to sit here through this summer day, until that blessed summer sun sinks low in the west, and to show you what a poor creature you are, through the lips of every chance wayfarer who may come in at your gate."

"What do you mean?" inquired the Hermit with a furious air.

"I mean that yonder is your gate, and there are you, and here am I; I mean that I know it to be a moral impossibility that any person can stray in at that gate from any point of the compass, with any sort of experience, gained at first hand, or derived from another, that can confute me and justify you."

"You are an arrogant and boastful hero," said the Hermit. "You think yourself profoundly wise."

"Bah!" returned Mr. Traveller, quietly smoking. "There is little wisdom in knowing that every man must be up and doing, and that all mankind are made dependent on one another."

"You have companions outside," said the Hermit. "I am not to be imposed upon by your assumed confidence in the people who may enter."

"A depraved distrust," returned the visitor, compassionately raising his eyebrows, "of course belongs to your state. I can't help that."

"Do you mean to tell me you have no confederates?"

"I mean to tell you nothing but what I have told you.

What I have told you is, that it is a moral impossibility that any son or daughter of Adam can stand on this ground that I put my foot on, or on any ground that mortal treads, and gainsay the healthy tenure on which we hold our existence."

"Which is," sneered the Hermit, "according to you—"

"Which is," returned the other, "according to Eternal Providence, that we must arise and wash our faces, and do our gregarious work, and act and react on one another, leaving only the idiot and the palsied to sit blinking in the corner. Come!" apostrophising the gate. "Open, Sesame! Show his eyes and grieve his heart! I don't care who comes, for I know what must come of it!"

With that, he faced round a little on his billet of wood towards the gate; and Mr. Mopes, the Hermit, after two or three ridiculous bounces of indecision at his bed and back again, submitted to what he could not help himself against, and coiled himself on his window-ledge, holding to his bars, and looking out rather anxiously.

VI

PICKING UP MISS KIMMEENS

The day was by this time waning, when the gate again opened, and with the brilliant golden light that streamed from the declining sun, and touched the very bars of the sooty creature's den, there passed in a little child; a little girl with beautiful bright hair. She wore a plain straw hat, had a door-key in her hand, and tripped towards Mr. Traveller as if she were pleased to see him and were going to repose some childish confidence in him, when she caught sight of the figure behind the bars, and started back in terror.

"Don't be alarmed, darling!" said Mr. Traveller, taking her by the hand.

"Oh, but I don't like it!" urged the shrinking child; "it's dreadful."

"Well! I don't like it either," said Mr. Traveller.

"Who has put it there?" asked the little girl. "Does it bite?"

"No, — only barks. But can't you make up your mind to see it, my dear?" For she was covering her eyes.

"Oh, no, no, no!" returned the child. "I c
look at it!"

Mr. Traveller turned his head towards his frien
much as to ask him how he liked that instance c
and then took the child out at the still open gate, and
talking to her for some half an hour in the mellow sun
At length he returned, encouraging her as she held his
with both her hands; and, laying his protecting hand upon
head and smoothing her pretty hair, he addressed his frie
behind the bars as follows: —

Miss Pupford's establishment for six young ladies of tende
years is an establishment of a compact nature, an establishmen
in miniature, quite a pocket establishment. Miss Pupford, Mi
Pupford's assistant with the Parisian accent, Miss Pupforc
cook, and Miss Pupford's housemaid, complete what Miss Pupford calls the educational and domestic staff of her Lilliputian College.

Miss Pupford is one of the most amiable of her sex; it necessarily follows that she possesses a sweet temper, and would own to the possession of a great deal of sentiment if she considered it quite reconcilable with her duty to parents. Deeming it not in the bond, Miss Pupford keeps it as far out of sight as she can — which (God bless her!) is not very far.

Miss Pupford's assistant with the Parisian accent may be regarded as in some sort an inspired lady, for she never conversed with a Parisian, and was never out of England — except once in the pleasure-boat Lively, in the foreign waters that ebb and flow two miles off Margate at high water. Even under those geographically favourable circumstances for the acquisition of the French language in its utmost politeness and purity, Miss Pupford's assistant did not fully profit by the opportunity; for, the pleasure-boat Lively so strongly asserted its title to its name on that occasion, that she was reduced to the condition of lying in the bottom of the boat pickling in brine — as if she were being salted down for the use of the Navy — undergoing at the same time great mental alarm, corporeal distress, and clear-starching derangement.

When Miss Pupford and her assistant first foregat
known to men, or pupils. But, it was long ago. A l
have established itself among pupils that the two on

school together, were it not for the difficulty and audacity of imagining Miss Pupford born without mittens, and without a front, and without a bit of gold wire among her front teeth, and without little dabs of powder on her neat little face and nose. Indeed, whenever Miss Pupford gives a little lecture on the mythology of the misguided heathens (always carefully excluding Cupid from recognition), and tells how Minerva sprang, perfectly equipped, from the brain of Jupiter, she is half supposed to hint, "So I myself came into the world, completely up in Pinnock, Mangnall, Tables, and the use of the Globes."

Howbeit, Miss Pupford and Miss Pupford's assistant are old, old friends. And it is thought by pupils that, after pupils are gone to bed, they even call one another by their Christian names in the quiet little parlour. For once upon a time on a thunderous afternoon, when Miss Pupford fainted away without notice, Miss Pupford's assistant (never heard, before or since, to address her otherwise than as Miss Pupford) ran to her, crying out, "My dearest Euphemia!" And Euphemia is Miss Pupford's Christian name on the sampler (date picked out) hanging up in the College hall, where the two peacocks, terrified to death by some German text that is waddling down hill after them out of a cottage, are scuttling away to hide their profiles in two immense bean-stalks growing out of flower-pots.

Also, there is a notion latent among pupils that Miss Pupford was once in love, and that the beloved object still moves upon this ball. Also, that he is a public character, and a personage of vast consequence. Also, that Miss Pupford's assistant knows all about it. For sometimes of an afternoon when Miss Pupford has been reading the paper through her little gold eye-glass (it is necessary to read it on the spot, as the boy calls for it, with ill-conditioned punctuality, in an hour), she has become agitated, and has said to her assistant, "G.!" Then Miss Pupford's assistant has gone to Miss Pupford, and Miss Pupford has pointed out, with her eye-glass, G. in the paper, and then Miss Pupford's assistant has read about G., and has shown sympathy. So stimulated has the pupil-mind been in its time to curiosity on the subject of G., that once, under temporary circumstances favourable to the bold sally, one fearless pupil did actually obtain possession of the paper, and range all over it in search of G., who had been discovered therein by Miss Pupford not ten minutes before. But no G. could be identified, except one capital offender

who had been executed in a state of great hardihood, and it was not to be supposed that Miss Pupford could ever have loved *him*. Besides, he could n't be always being executed. Besides, he got into the paper again, alive, within a month.

On the whole, it is suspected by the pupil-mind that G is a short, chubby old gentleman, with little black sealing-wax boots up to his knees, whom a sharply observant pupil, Miss Linx, when she once went to Tunbridge Wells with Miss Pupford for the holidays, reported on her return (privately and confidentially) to have seen come capering up to Miss Pupford on the Promenade, and to have detected in the act of squeezing Miss Pupford's hand, and to have heard pronounce the words, "Cruel Euphemia, ever thine!" — or something like that. Miss Linx hazarded a guess that he might be House of Commons, or Money Market, or Court Circular, or Fashionable Movements; which would account for his getting into the paper so often. But it was fatally objected by the pupil-mind, that none of those notabilities could possibly be spelled with a G.

There are other occasions, closely watched and perfectly comprehended by the pupil-mind, when Miss Pupford imparts with mystery to her assistant that there is special excitement in the morning paper. These occasions are, when Miss Pupford finds an old pupil coming out under the head of Births, or Marriages. Affectionate tears are invariably seen in Miss Pupford's meek little eyes when this is the case; and the pupil-mind, perceiving that its order has distinguished itself, — though the fact is never mentioned by Miss Pupford, — becomes elevated, and feels that it likewise is reserved for greatness.

Miss Pupford's assistant with the Parisian accent has a little more bone than Miss Pupford, but is of the same trim, orderly, diminutive cast, and, from long contemplation, admiration, and imitation of Miss Pupford, has grown like her. Being entirely devoted to Miss Pupford, and having a pretty talent for pencil-drawing, she once made a portrait of that lady, which was so instantly identified and hailed by the pupils, that it was done on stone at five shillings. Surely the softest and milkiest stone that ever was quarried received that likeness of Miss Pupford! The lines of her placid little nose are so undecided in it that strangers to the work of art are observed to be exceedingly perplexed as to where the nose goes to, and involuntarily feel their own noses in a disconcerted manner. Miss Pupford being

represented in a state of dejection at an open window, ruminating over a bowl of goldfish, the pupil-mind has settled that the bowl was presented by G., and that he wreathed the bowl with flowers of soul, and that Miss Pupford is depicted as waiting for him on a memorable occasion when he was behind his time.

The approach of the last midsummer holidays had a particular interest for the pupil-mind, by reason of its knowing that Miss Pupford was bidden, on the second day of those holidays, to the nuptials of a former pupil. As it was impossible to conceal the fact — so extensive were the dressmaking preparations — Miss Pupford openly announced it. But she held it due to parents to make the announcement with an air of gentle melancholy, as if marriage were (as indeed it exceptionally has been) rather a calamity. With an air of softened resignation and pity, therefore, Miss Pupford went on with her preparations; and meanwhile no pupil ever went up stairs, or came down, without peeping in at the door of Miss Pupford's bedroom (when Miss Pupford wasn't there), and bringing back some surprising intelligence concerning the bonnet.

The extensive preparations being completed on the day before the holidays, a unanimous entreaty was preferred to Miss Pupford by the pupil-mind — finding expression through Miss Pupford's assistant — that she would deign to appear in all her splendour. Miss Pupford consenting, presented a lovely spectacle. And although the oldest pupil was barely thirteen, every one of the six became in two minutes perfect in the shape, cut, colour, price, and quality of every article Miss Pupford wore.

Thus delightfully ushered in, the holidays began. Five of the six pupils kissed little Kitty Kimmeens twenty times over (round total, one hundred times, for she was very popular), and so went home. Miss Kitty Kimmeens remained behind, for her relations and friends were all in India, far away. A self-helpful, steady little child is Miss Kitty Kimmeens, a dimpled child too, and a loving.

So the great marriage-day came, and Miss Pupford, quite as much fluttered as any bride could be (G.! thought Miss Kitty Kimmeens), went away, splendid to behold, in a carriage that was sent for her. But not Miss Pupford only went away; for Miss Pupford's assistant went away with her, on a dutiful visit to an aged uncle, though surely the venerable gentleman

couldn't live in the gallery of the church where [illegible] was to be, thought Miss Kitty Kimmeens,— [illegible] Pupford's assistant had let out that she was going [illegible] the cook was going didn't appear, but she gene[illegible] to Miss Kimmeens that she was bound, rather ag[illegible] her on a pilgrimage to perform some pious office that [illegible] ribbons necessary to her best bonnet, and also [illegible] to shoes.

"So you see," said the housemaid, when they were gone, "there's nobody left in the house but you and me, M[illegible] Kimmeens."

"Nobody else," said Miss Kitty Kimmeens, shaking her curls a little sadly. "Nobody!"

"And you wouldn't like your Bella to go too; would you, Miss Kimmeens?" said the housemaid. (She being Bella.)

"N—no," answered little Miss Kimmeens.

"Your poor Bella is forced to stay with you, whether she likes it or not; ain't she, Miss Kimmeens?"

"*Don't* you like it?" inquired Kitty.

"Why, you're such a darling, miss, that it would be unkind of your Bella to make objections. Yet my brother-in-law has been took unexpected bad by this morning's post. And your poor Bella is much attached to him, letting alone her favourite sister, Miss Kimmeens."

"Is he very ill?" asked little Kitty.

"Your poor Bella has her fears so, Miss Kimmeens," returned the housemaid, with her apron at her eyes. "It was but his inside, it is true, but it might mount, and the doctor said that if it mounted he wouldn't answer." Here the housemaid was so overcome that Kitty administered the only comfort she had ready: which was a kiss.

"If it hadn't been for disappointing [illegible], Miss Kimmeens," said the housemaid, "your Bella would [illegible] to stay with you. For [illegible] company, Miss Kimmeens, much more so than your own poor Bella."

"But you are very nice, Bella."

"Your Bella could [illegible] Miss Kimmeens," returned the housemaid, [illegible] her power this day."

With which [illegible] a heavy sigh, and shook her head [illegible]

"If it had been anyways right to disappoint Cook," she pursued, in a contemplative and abstracted manner, "it might have been so easy done! I could have got to my brother-in-law's, and had the best part of the day there, and got back, long before our ladies come home at night, and neither the one nor the other of them need never have known it. Not that Miss Pupford would at all object, but that it might put her out, being tender-hearted. Hows'ever, your own poor Bella, Miss Kimmeens," said the housemaid, rousing herself, "is forced to stay with you, and you're a precious love, if not a liberty."

"Bella," said little Kitty, after a short silence.

"Call your own poor Bella *your* Bella, dear," the housemaid besought her.

"My Bella, then."

"Bless your considerate heart!" said the housemaid.

"If you would not mind leaving me, I should not mind being left. I am not afraid to stay in the house alone. And you need not be uneasy on my account, for I would be very careful to do no harm."

"Oh! As to harm, you more than sweetest, if not a liberty," exclaimed the housemaid in a rapture, "your Bella could trust you anywhere, being so steady, and so answerable. The oldest head in this house (me and Cook says), but for its bright face, is Miss Kimmeens. But no, I will not leave you; for you would think your Bella unkind."

"But if you are my Bella, you *must* go," returned the child.

"Must I?" said the housemaid, rising, on the whole, with alacrity. "What must be must be, Miss Kimmeens. Your own poor Bella acts according, though unwilling. But go or stay, your own poor Bella loves you, Miss Kimmeens."

It was certainly go, and not stay, for within five minutes Miss Kimmeens's own poor Bella — so much improved in point of spirits as to have grown almost sanguine on the subject of her brother-in-law — went her way, in apparel that seemed to have been expressly prepared for some festive occasion. Such are the changes of this fleeting world, and so short-sighted are we poor mortals!

When the house door closed with a bang and a shake, it seemed to Miss Kimmeens to be a very heavy house door, shutting her up in a wilderness of a house. But Miss Kimmeens

being, as before stated, of a self-reliant and methodical character, presently began to parcel out the long summer day before her.

And first she thought she would go all over the house, to make quite sure that nobody with a great-coat on, and a carving-knife in it, had got under one of the beds or into one of the cupboards. Not that she had ever before been troubled by the image of anybody armed with a great-coat and a carving-knife, but that it seemed to have been shaken into existence by the shake and the bang of the great street door, reverberating through the solitary house. So little Miss Kimmeens looked under the five empty beds of the five departed pupils, and looked under her own bed, and looked under Miss Pupford's bed, and looked under Miss Pupford's assistant's bed. And when she had done this, and was making the tour of the cupboards, the disagreeable thought came into her young head, What a very alarming thing it would be to find somebody with a mask on, like Guy Fawkes, hiding bolt upright in a corner, and pretending not to be alive! However, Miss Kimmeens, having finished her inspection without making any such uncomfortable discovery, sat down in her tidy little manner to needle-work, and began stitching away at a great rate.

The silence all about her soon grew very oppressive, and the more so because of the odd inconsistency that the more silent it was, the more noises there were. The noise of her own needle and thread, as she stitched, was infinitely louder in her ears than the stitching of all the six pupils, and of Miss Pupford, and of Miss Pupford's assistant, all stitching away at once on a highly emulative afternoon. Then the schoolroom clock conducted itself in a way in which it had never conducted itself before — fell lame somehow, and yet persisted in running on as hard and as loud as it could: the consequence of which behaviour was, that it staggered among the minutes in a state of the greatest confusion, and knocked them about in all directions without appearing to get on with its regular work. Perhaps this alarmed the stairs: but be that as it might, they began to creak in a most unusual manner, and then the furniture began to crack, and then poor little Miss Kimmeens, not liking the furtive aspect of things in general, began to sing as she stitched. But it was not her own voice that she heard — it was somebody else making believe to be Kitty, and singing excessively flat,

without any heart — so as that would never mend matters, she left off again.

By and by the stitching became so palpable a failure that Miss Kitty Kimmeens folded her work neatly, and put it away in its box, and gave it up. Then the question arose about reading. But no; the book that was so delightful when there was somebody she loved for her eyes to fall on when they rose from the page, had not more heart in it than her own singing now. The book went to its shelf as the needle-work had gone to its box, and since something *must* be done — thought the child, "I'll go put my room to rights."

She shared her room with her dearest little friend among the other five pupils, and why, then, should she now conceive a lurking dread of the little friend's bedstead? But she did. There was a stealthy air about its innocent white curtains, and there were even dark hints of a dead girl lying under the coverlet. The great want of human company, the great need of a human face, began now to express itself in the facility with which the furniture put on strange exaggerated resemblances to human looks. A chair with a menacing frown was horribly out of temper in a corner; a most vicious chest of drawers snarled at her from between the windows. It was no relief to escape from those monsters to the looking-glass, for the reflection said, "What! Is that you all alone there? How you stare!" And the background was all a great void stare as well.

The day dragged on, dragging Kitty with it very slowly by the hair of her head, until it was time to eat. There were good provisions in the pantry, but their right flavour and relish had evaporated with the five pupils, and Miss Pupford, and Miss Pupford's assistant, and the cook and housemaid. Where was the use of laying the cloth symmetrically for one small guest, who had gone on ever since the morning growing smaller and smaller, while the empty house had gone on swelling larger and larger? The very Grace came out wrong, for who were "we" who were going to receive and be thankful? So Miss Kimmeens was *not* thankful, and found herself taking her dinner in very slovenly style — gobbling it up, in short, rather after the manner of the lower animals, not to particularise the pigs.

But this was by no means the worst of the change wrought

out in the naturally loving and cheery little creature tary day wore on. She began to brood and be suspi discovered that she was full of wrongs and injurie people she knew got tainted by her lonely thoughts, bad.

It was all very well for papa, a widower in India, ıd l home to be educated, and to pay a handsome round a ve. year for her to Miss Pupford, and to write charmin letters to his darling little daughter; but what did he care fo hei left by herself, when he was (as no doubt he always ı ing himself in company from morning till night? s only sent her here, after all, to get her out of the way. It looked like it — looked like it to-day, that is, for she had never dreamed of such a thing before.

And this old pupil who was being married. It was insupportably conceited and selfish in the old pupil to be married. She was very vain, and very glad to show off; but it was highly probable that she was n't pretty; and even if she were pretty (which Miss Kimmeens now totally denied), she had no business to be married; and, even if marriage were conceded, she had no business to ask Miss Pupford to her wedding. As to Miss Pupford, she was too old to go to any wedding. She ought to know that. She had much better attend to her business. She had thought she looked nice in the morning, but she did n't look nice. She was a stupid old thing. G was another stupid old thing. Miss Pupford's assistant was another. They were all stupid old things together.

More than that, it began to be obvious that this was a plot. They had said to one another, "Never mind Kitty; you get off, and I 'll get off; and we 'll leave Kitty to look after herself. Who cares for *her?*" To be sure they were right in that question; for who *did* care for her, a poor little lonely thing against whom they all planned and plotted? Nobody, nobody! Here Kitty sobbed.

At all other times she was the pet of the whole house, and loved her five companions in return with a child's tenderest and most ingenuous attachment; but now the five companions put on ugly colours, and appeared for the first time under a sulle cloud. There they were, all at their homes that day, bei made much of, being taken out, being spoilt and made disagr able, and caring nothing for her. It was like their arti

selfishness always to tell her when they came back, under pretence of confidence and friendship, all those details about where they had been, and what they had done and seen, and how often they had said, "Oh! If we had only darling little Kitty here!" Here indeed! I dare say! When they came back after the holidays, they were used to being received by Kitty, and to saying that coming to Kitty was like coming to another home. Very well, then, why did they go away? If they meant it, why did they go away? Let them answer that. But they did n't mean it, and could n't answer that, and they did n't tell the truth, and people who did n't tell the truth were hateful. When they came back next time, they should be received in a new manner; they should be avoided and shunned.

And there, the while she sat all alone revolving how ill she was used, and how much better she was than the people who were not alone, the wedding breakfast was going on — no question of it! With a nasty great bride-cake, and with those ridiculous orange flowers, and with that conceited bride, and that hideous bridegroom, and those heartless bridesmaids, and Miss Pupford stuck up at the table! They thought they were enjoying themselves, but it would come home to them one day to have thought so. They would all be dead in a few years, let them enjoy themselves ever so much. It was a religious comfort to know that.

It was such a comfort to know it, that little Miss Kitty Kimmeens suddenly sprang from the chair in which she had been musing in a corner, and cried out, "Oh, these envious thoughts are not mine! Oh, this wicked creature is n't me! Help me, somebody! I go wrong, alone by my weak self. Help me, anybody!"

"— Miss Kimmeens is not a professed philosopher, sir," said Mr. Traveller, presenting her at the barred window, and smoothing her shining hair, "but I apprehend there was some tincture of philosophy in her words, and in the prompt action with which she followed them. That action was, to emerge from her unnatural solitude, and look abroad for wholesome sympathy, to bestow and to receive. Her footsteps strayed to this gate, bringing her here by chance, as an apposite contrast to you. The child came out, sir. If you have the wisdom to learn from a child (but I doubt it, for that requires more wisdom than so-

in your condition would seem to possess), you ca[n] than imitate the child, and come out too — fr[om] demoralising hutch of yours."

VII

PICKING UP THE TINKER

It was now sunset. The Hermit had betaken himself to his bed of cinders half an hour ago, and, lying on it in his blanket and skewer with his back to the window, took not the smallest heed of the appeal addressed to him.

All that had been said for the last two hours had been said to a tinkling accompaniment performed by the Tinker, who had got to work upon some villager's pot or kettle, and was working briskly outside. This music, still continuing, seemed to put it into Mr. Traveller's mind to have another word or two with the Tinker. So, holding Miss Kimmeens (with whom he was now on the most friendly terms) by the hand, he went out at the gate to where the Tinker was seated at his work on the patch of grass on the opposite side of the road, with his wallet of tools open before him, and his little fire smoking.

"I am glad to see you employed," said Mr. Traveller.

"I am glad to *be* employed," returned the Tinker, looking up as he put the finishing touches to his job. "But why are you glad?"

"I thought you were a lazy fellow when I saw you this morning."

"I was only disgusted," said the Tinker.

"Do you mean with the fine weather?"

"With the fine weather?" repeated the Tinker, staring.

"You told me you were not particular as to weather, and I thought —"

"Ha, ha! How should such as me get on, if we was particklar as to weather? We must take it as it comes, and make the best of it. There's something good in all weathers. If it don't happen to be good for my work to-day, it's good for some other man's to-day, and will come round to me to-morrow. We must all live."

"Pray shake hands," said Mr. Traveller.

[redacted]

"Take care, sir," was the Tinker's caution, as he reached up his hand in surprise; "the black comes off."

"I am glad of it," said Mr. Traveller. "I have been for several hours among other black that does not come off."

"You are speaking of Tom in there?"

"Yes."

"Well now," said the Tinker, blowing the dust off his job which was finished. "Ain't it enough to disgust a pig, if he could give his mind to it?"

"If he could give his mind to it," returned the other, smiling, "the probability is that he would n't be a pig."

"There you clench the nail," returned the Tinker. "Then what 's to be said for Tom?"

"Truly, very little."

"Truly nothing you mean, sir," said the Tinker as he put away his tools.

"A better answer, and (I freely acknowledge) my meaning. I infer that he was the cause of your disgust?"

"Why, lookee here, sir," said the Tinker, rising to his feet, and wiping his face on the corner of his black apron energetically; "I leave you to judge! I ask you! — Last night I has a job that needs to be done in the night, and I works all night. Well, there 's nothing in that. But this morning I comes along this road here, looking for a sunny and soft spot to sleep in, and I sees this desolation and ruination. I 've lived myself in desolation and ruination; I knows many a fellow-creetur that 's forced to live life-long in desolation and ruination; and I sits me down and takes pity on it, as I casts my eyes about. Then comes up the long-winded one as I told you of, from that gate, and spins himself out like a silk-worm concerning the Dickens (of my Dickens at home will excuse me) as has made it all — made it of his own choice! And tells me, if you please, of his likewise choosing to go ragged and naked, and grimy — mean, degrading, mountebanking, in what is the real hard lot of thousands and thousands! Why, then I say it 's a unbearable and nonsensical piece of monstrosity, and I 'm disgusted. I 'm ashamed and disgusted!"

"I wish you would come and look at him," said Mr. Traveller, clapping the Tinker on the shoulder.

"Not I, sir," he replied. "*I* ain't a going to flatter him up by looking at him!"

"But he is asleep."

"Are you sure he is asleep?" asked the Tinker, with an unwilling air, as he shouldered his wallet.

"Sure."

"Then I'll look at him for a quarter of a minute," said the Tinker, "since you so much wish it; but not a moment longer."

They all three went back across the road; and, through the barred window, by the dying glow of the sunset coming in at the gate — which the child held open for its admission — he could be pretty clearly discerned lying on his bed.

"You see him?" asked Mr. Traveller.

"Yes," returned the Tinker, "and he's worse than I thought him."

Mr. Traveller then whispered in few words what he had done since morning; and asked the Tinker what he thought of that.

"I think," returned the Tinker, as he turned from the window, "that you've wasted a day on him."

"I think so too; though not, I hope, upon myself. Do you happen to be going anywhere near the Peal of Bells?"

"That's my direct way, sir," said the Tinker.

"I invite you to supper there. And, as I learn from this young lady that she goes some three-quarters of a mile in the same direction, we will drop her on the road, and we will spare time to keep her company at her garden-gate until her own Bella comes home."

So Mr. Traveller, and the child, and the Tinker went along very amicably in the sweet-scented evening; and the moral with which the Tinker dismissed the subject was, that he said in his trade that metal that rotted for want of use had better be left to rot, and could n't rot too soon, considering how much true metal rotted from over-use and hard service.

SOMEBODY'S LUGGAGE

CHAPTER I

HIS LEAVING IT TILL CALLED FOR

THE writer of these humble lines being a Waiter, and having come of a family of Waiters, and owning at the present time five brothers who are all Waiters, and likewise an only sister who is a Waitress, would wish to offer a few words respecting his calling; first having the pleasure of hereby in a friendly manner offering the Dedication of the same unto JOSEPH, much respected Head Waiter at the Slamjam Coffee-House, London, E. C., than which a individual more eminently deserving of the name of man, or a more amenable honour to his own head and heart, whether considered in the light of a Waiter, or regarded as a human being, do not exist.

In case confusion should arise in the public mind (which it is open to confusion on many subjects) respecting what is meant or implied by the term Waiter, the present humble lines would wish to offer an explanation. It may not be generally known that the person as goes out to wait is *not* a Waiter. It may not be generally known that the hand as is called in extra, at the Freemasons' Tavern, or the London, or the Albion, or otherwise, is *not* a Waiter. Such hands may be took on for Public Dinners by the bushel (and you may know them by their breathing with difficulty when in attendance, and taking away the bottle ere yet it is half out); but such are *not* Waiters. For you cannot lay down the tailoring, or the shoemaking, or the brokering, or the green-grocering, or the pictorial-periodicalling, or the second-hand wardrobe, or the small fancy businesses,—you cannot lay down those lines of life at your will and pleasure by the half-day or evening, and take up Waitering. You may suppose you can, but you cannot; or you may go so far as to say you do, but you do not. Nor yet can you lay down the gentleman's-service when stimulated by prolonged incompati-

bility on the part of Cooks (and here it may be re[illegible] t Cooking and Incompatibility will be mostly found u[illegible]l), and take up Waitering. It has been ascertained that what a gentleman will sit meek under, at home, he will not bear out of doors, at the Slamjam or any similar establishment. Then what is the inference to be drawn respecting true Waitering? You must be bred to it. You must be born to it.

Would you know how born to it, Fair Reader,— if of the adorable female sex? Then learn from the biographical experience of one that is a Waiter in the sixty-first year of his age.

You were conveyed,— ere yet your dawning powers were otherwise developed than to harbour vacancy in your inside,— you were conveyed, by surreptitious means, into a pantry adjoining the Admiral Nelson, Civic and General Dining-Rooms, there to receive by stealth that healthful sustenance which is the pride and boast of the British female constitution. Your mother was married to your father (himself a distant Waiter) in the profoundest secrecy; for a Waitress known to be married would ruin the best of businesses,— it is the same as on the stage. Hence your being smuggled into the pantry, and that — to add to the infliction — by an unwilling grandmother. Under the combined influence of the smells of roast and boiled, and soup, and gas, and malt liquors, you partook of your earliest nourishment; your unwilling grandmother sitting prepared to catch you when your mother was called and dropped you; your grandmother's shawl ever ready to stifle your natural complainings; your innocent mind surrounded by uncongenial cruets, dirty plates, dish-covers, and cold gravy; your mother calling down the pipe for veals and porks, instead of soothing you with nursery rhymes. Under these untoward circumstances you were early weaned. Your unwilling grandmother, ever growing more unwilling as your food assimilated less, then contracted habits of shaking you till your system curdled, and your food would not assimilate at all. At length she was no longer spared, and could have been thankfully spared much sooner. When your brothers began to appear in succession, your mother retired, left off her smart dressing (she had previously been a smart dresser), and her dark ringlets (which had previously been flowing), and haunted your father late of nights, lying in wait for him, through all weathers, up the shabby court which led to the back door of the Royal Old Dust-Bin (said to have been so

[redacted]

named by George the Fourth), where your father was H[illegible]
But the Dust-Bin was going down then, and your father [illegible]
but little, excepting from a liquid point of view. Your moth[illegible]
object in those visits was of a housekeeping character, [illegible]
you was set on to whistle your father out. Sometimes [illegible]
came out, but generally not. Come or not come, however, [illegible]
that part of his existence which was unconnected with [illegible]
Waitering was kept a close secret, and was acknowledged [illegible]
your mother to be a close secret, and you and your mo[illegible]
flitted about the court, close secrets both of you, and w[illegible]
scarcely have confessed under torture that you knew [illegible]
father, or that your father had any name than Dick (w[illegible]
was n't his name, though he was never known by any oth[illegible]
or that he had kith or kin, or chick or child. Perhaps [illegible]
attraction of this mystery, combined with your father's [illegible]
ing a damp compartment to himself, behind a leaky cistern [illegible]
the Dust-Bin, — a sort of a cellar compartment, with a [illegible]
it, and a smell, and a plate-rack, and a bottle-rack, and [illegible]
windows that did n't match each other or anything [illegible]
no daylight, — caused your young mind to feel [illegible]
you must grow up to be a Waiter too; but you did [illegible]
vinced of it, and so did all your brothers, down to [illegible]
Every one of you felt convinced that you was born [illegible]
Waitering. At this stage of your career, what was y[illegible]
one day when your father came home to your mother [illegible]
broad daylight, — of itself an act of Madness on the [illegible]
Waiter, — and took to his bed (leastwise your [illegible]
family's bed), with the statement that his eyes were [illegible]
kidneys. Physicians being in vain, your father [illegible]
repeating at intervals for a day and a night, when [illegible]
reason and old business fitfully illuminated his being, [illegible]
and two is five. And three is sixpence." Interred [illegible]
parochial department of the neighbouring church [illegible]
accompanied to the grave by as many Waiters of [illegible]
as could spare the morning time from their [illegible]
ch[illegible], your [illegible] form was attired in a [illegible]
[illegible], and you was [illegible] from motives of [illegible]
[illegible] and [illegible] supper. Here [illegible]
[illegible] plates which [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] and on what you found in the glasses which [illegible]

beyond driblets and lemon), by night you dropped ing, till you was cuffed awake, and by day was set every individual article in the coffee-room. Your sawdust; your counterpane being ashes of cigars quently hiding a heavy heart under the smart white neckankecher (or, correctly speaking, low more to the left), you picked up the rudiments w. from an extra, by the name of Bishops, and by washer, and gradually elevating your mind with ou back of the corner-box partition, until such time u the inkstand when it was out of hand, attained to to be the Waiter that you find yourself.

I could wish here to offer a few respectful words on be of the calling so long the calling of myself and family, and public interest in which is but too often very limited. We not generally understood. No, we are not. Allowance en is not made for us. For, say that we ever show a little d ing listlessness of spirits, or what might be termed indiffe or apathy. Put it to yourself what would your own sta mind be, if you was one of an enormous family every mem of which except you was always greedy, and in a hurry. Put it to yourself that you was regularly replete with animal food at the slack hours of one in the day and again at nine P. M., and that the repleter you was, the more voracious all your fellow-creatures came in. Put it to yourself that it was your business, when your digestion was well on, to take a personal interest and sympathy in a hundred gentlemen fresh and fresh (say, for the sake of argument, only a hundred), whose imaginations was given up to grease and fat and gravy and melted butter, and abandoned to questioning you about cuts of this, and dishes of that, — each of 'em going on as if him and you and the bill of fare was alone in the world. Then look what you are expected to know. You are never out, but they seem to think you regularly attend everywhere. "What 's this, Christopher, that I hear about the smashed Excursion Train ?" — "How are they doing at the Italian Opera, Christopher ?" — "Christopher, what are the real particulars of this business at the Yorkshire Bank ?" Similarly a ministry gives me more trouble than it gives the Queen. As to Lord Palmerston, the constant and wearing connection into which I have been brought with his lordship during the last few years is deserving of a

pension. Then look at the Hypocrites we are made, and the lies (white, I hope) that are forced upon us! Why must a sedentary-pursuited Waiter be considered to be a judge of horseflesh, and to have a most tremenjous interest in horse-training and racing? Yet it would be half our little incomes out of our pockets if we did n't take on to have those sporting tastes. It is the same (inconceivable why!) with Farming. Shooting, equally so. I am sure that so regular as the months of August, September, and October come round, I am ashamed of myself in my own private bosom for the way in which I make believe to care whether or not the grouse is strong on the wing (much their wings, or drum-sticks either, signifies to me, uncooked!), and whether the partridges is plentiful among the turnips, and whether the pheasants is shy or bold, or anything else you please to mention. Yet you may see me, or any other Waiter of my standing, holding on by the back of the box, and leaning over a gentleman with his purse out and his bill before him, discussing these points in a confidential tone of voice, as if my happiness in life entirely depended on 'em.

I have mentioned our little incomes. Look at the most unreasonable point of all, and the point on which the greatest injustice is done us! Whether it is owing to our always carrying so much change in our right-hand trousers pocket, and so many halfpence in our coat-tails, or whether it is human natur (which I were loath to believe), what is meant by the everlasting fable that Head Waiters is rich? How did that fable get into circulation? Who first put it about, and what are the facts to establish the unblushing statement? Come forth, thou slanderer, and refer the public to the Waiter's will in Doctors' Commons supporting thy malignant hiss! Yet this is so commonly dwelt upon — especially by the screws who give Waiters the least — that denial is vain; and we are obliged, for our credit's sake, to carry our heads as if we were going into a business, when of the two we are much more likely to go into a union. There was formerly a screw as frequented the Slamjam ere yet the present writer had quitted that establishment on a question of tea-ing his assistant-staff out of his own pocket, which screw carried the taunt to its bitterest height. Never soaring above threepence, and as often as not grovelling on the earth a penny lower, he yet represented the present writer as a large holder of Consols, a lender of money on mortgage, a

Capitalist. He has been overheard to dilate to othe on the allegation that the present writer put out tl pounds at interest in Distilleries and Breweries. "\ topher," he would say (having grovelled his low... earth half a moment before), "looking out for a house to c eh? Can't find a business to be disposed of on a scale up to your resources, humph?" To such a dizzy precipi falsehood has this misrepresentation taken wing, that the ... known and highly respected OLD CHARLES, long eminent at the West-Country Hotel, and by some considered the Father of the Waitering, found himself under the obligation to fall intc it through so many years that his own wife (for he had an unbeknown old lady in that capacity towards himself) believed it! And what was the consequence? When he was borne to his grave on the shoulders of six picked Waiters, with six more for change, six more acting as pall-bearers, all keeping step in a pouring shower without a dry eye visible, and a concourse only inferior to Royalty, his pantry and lodgings was equally ransacked high and low for property, and none was found! How could it be found, when, beyond his last monthly collection of walking-sticks, umbrellas, and pocket-handkerchiefs (which happened to have been not yet disposed of, though he had ever been through life punctual in clearing off his collections by the month), there was no property existing? Such, however, is the force of this universal libel, that the widow of Old Charles, at the present hour an inmate of the Almshouses of the Cork-Cutters' Company, in Blue Anchor Road (identified sitting at the door of one of 'em, in a clean cap and a Windsor arm-chair, only last Monday), expects John's hoarded wealth to be found hourly! Nay, ere yet he had succumbed to the grisly dart, and when his portrait was painted in oils life size, by subscription of the frequenters of the West Country, to hang over the coffee-room chimney-piece, there were not wanting those who contended that what is termed the accessories of such portrait ought to be the Bank of England out of window, and a strong-box on the table. And but for better regulated minds contending for a bottle and screw and the attitude of drawing, — and carrying their point, — it would have been so handed down to posterity.

I am now brought to the title of the present remarks. Having, I hope without offence to any quarter, offered such

of A. 1.) "confirmation strong." So it had really and truly happened. Miss Martin is the young lady at the bar as makes out our bills; and though higher than I could wish, considering her station, is perfectly well behaved.

Further investigations led to the disclosure that there was a bill against this Luggage to the amount of Two sixteen six. The Luggage had been lying under the bedstead in 24 B over six year. The bedstead is a four-poster, with a deal of old hanging and valance, and is, as I once said, probably connected with more than 24 Bs, — which I remember my hearers was pleased to laugh at, at the time.

I don't know why, — when do we know why? — but this Luggage laid heavy on my mind. I fell a wondering about Somebody, and what he had got and been up to. I couldn't satisfy my thoughts why he should leave so much Luggage against so small a bill. For I had the Luggage out within a day or two, and turned it over, and the following were the items: A black portmanteau, a black bag, a desk, a dressing-case, a brown-paper parcel, a hat-box, and an umbrella strapped to a walking-stick. It was all very dusty and fluey. I had our porter up to get under the bed and fetch it out; and though he habitually wallows in dust, — swims in it from morning to night, and wears a close-fitting waistcoat with black calico sleeves for the purpose, — it made him sneeze again, and his throat was that hot with it that it was obliged to be cooled with a drink of Allsopp's draught.

The Luggage so got the better of me, that instead of having it put back when it was well dusted and washed with a wet cloth, — previous to which it was so covered with feathers that you might have thought it was turning into poultry, and would by and by begin to Lay, — I say, instead of having it put back, I had it carried into one of my places down stairs. There from time to time, I stared at it and stared at it, till it seemed to grow big and grow little, and come forward at me and retreat again, and go through all manner of performances resembling intoxication. When this had lasted weeks, — I may say months, and not be far out, — I one day thought of asking Miss Martin for the particulars of the Two sixteen six total. She was so obliging as to extract it from the books, — it dated before her time, and here follows a true copy —

offee-Room.

			£	s.	d.
1856.	No. 4.				
Feb. 2d,	Pen and Paper	. . . . .			
	Port Negus	. . . . .			
	Ditto	. . . . .			
	Pen and paper	. . . .			
	Tumbler broken	. . . .			
	Brandy	. . . . .			
	Pen and paper	. . . . .			
	Anchovy toast	. . . .			
	Pen and paper	. . . .			
	Bed	. . . . .			
Feb. 3d,	Pen and paper	. . . . .			
	Breakfast	. . . . .	0	[illegible]	[illegible]
	" Broiled ham	. . .	0	2	0
	" Eggs	. . . .	0	1	[illegible]
	" Water-cresses	. . .	0	1	[illegible]
	" Shrimps	. . .	0	1	0
	Pen and paper	. . . . .	0	0	6
	Blotting-paper	. . . .	0	0	6
	Messenger to Paternoster Row and back	. . . .	0	1	6
	Again, when No Answer	. .	0	1	6
	Brandy 2*s*., Devilled Pork chop 2*s*.	.	0	4	0
	Pens and paper	. . . .	0	1	0
	Messenger to Albemarle Street and back	. . . .	0	1	0
	Again (detained), when No Answer	.	0	1	6
	Salt-cellar broken	. . . . .	0	3	6
	Large Liqueur-glass Orange Brandy	.	0	1	6
	Dinner, Soup, Fish, Joint, and Bird	.	0	7	6
	Bottle old East India Brown	. .	0	8	0
	Pen and paper	. . . . .	0	0	6
			£2	16	6

Mem.: January 1st, 1857. He went out after dinner, directig Luggage to be ready when he called for it. Never called.

So far from throwing a light upon the subject, this bill ppeared to me, if I may so express my doubts, to involve it

in a yet more lurid halo. Speculating it over with the Mistress, she informed me that the Luggage had been advertised in the Master's time as being to be sold after such and such a day to pay expenses, but no farther steps had been taken. (I may here remark that the Mistress is a widow in her fourth year. The Master was possessed of one of those unfortunate constitutions in which Spirits turns to water, and rises in the ill-starred Victim.)

My speculating it over, not then only, but repeatedly, sometimes with the Mistress, sometimes with one, sometimes with another, led up to the Mistress's saying to me, — whether at first in joke or in earnest, or half joke and half earnest, it matters not —

"Christopher, I am going to make you a handsome offer."

(If this should meet her eye, — a lovely blue, — may she not take it ill my mentioning that, if I had been eight or ten year younger, I would have done as much by her! That is, I would have made her a offer. It is for others than me to denominate it a handsome one.)

"Christopher, I am going to make you a handsome offer."

"Put a name to it, ma'am."

"Look here, Christopher. Run over the articles of Somebody's Luggage. You've got it all by heart, I know."

"A black portmanteau, ma'am, a black bag, a desk, a dressing-case, a brown-paper parcel, a hat-box, and an umbrella strapped to a walking-stick."

"All just as they were left. Nothing opened, nothing tampered with."

"You are right, ma'am. All locked but the brown-paper parcel, and that sealed."

The Mistress was leaning on Miss Martin's desk at the bar window, and she taps the open book that lays upon the desk, — she has a pretty made hand to be sure, — and bends her head over it and laughs.

"Come," says she, "Christopher. Pay me Somebody's bill, and you shall have Somebody's Luggage."

I rather took to the idea from the first moment; but,

"It mayn't be worth the money," I objected, seeming to hold back.

"That's a Lottery," says the Mistress, folding her arms upon the book, — it ain't her hands alone that's pretty made, the observation extends right up her arms. "Won't you venture

two pound sixteen shillings and sixpence in t[illegible] Why, there's no blanks!" says the Mistress, l[illegible] bobbing her head again; "you *must* win. If y[illegible] must win! All prizes in this Lottery! Draw [illegible] remember, Gentlemen Sportsmen, you'll still be[illegible] a black portmanteau, a black bag, a desk, a dre[illegible] sheet of brown paper, a hat-box, and an umbrella [illegible] walking-stick!"

To make short of it, Miss Martin come round [illegible]d Mrs Pratchett come round me, and the Mistress she wa[illegible]pletel[illegible] round me already, and all the women in the house come roun[illegible] me, and if it had been Six[illegible]of [illegible]o sixteen, I should have thought myself [illegible] For what can you do when they do come roun[illegible]

So I paid the money — d[illegible] and such a laughing as there was among 'em! But I turned the tables on 'em regularly when I said: —

"My family name is Blue Beard. I'm going to open Somebody's Luggage all alone in the Secret Chamber, and not a female eye catches sight of the contents!"

Whether I thought proper to have the firmness to keep to this don't signify, or whether any female eye, and if any, how many, was really present when the opening of the Luggage came off. Somebody's Luggage is the question at present; Nobody's eyes, nor yet noses.

What I still look at most, in connection with that Luggage, is the extraordinary quantity of writing-paper, and all written on! And not our paper neither, — not the paper charged in the bill, for we know our paper, — so he must have been always at it. And he had crumpled up this writing of his everywhere, in every part and parcel of his luggage. There was writing in his dressing-case, writing in his boots, writing among his shaving-tackle, writing in his hat-box, writing folded away down among the very whalebones of his umbrella.

His clothes was n't bad, what there was of 'em. His dressing-case was poor, — not a particle of silver stopper, — bottle apertures with nothing in 'em, like empty little dog-kennels, — and a most searching description of tooth-powder diffusing itself around, as under a deluded mistake that all the chinks in the fittings was divisions in teeth. His clothes I parted with, well enough, to a second-hand dealer not far from St Clement's Danes,

in the Strand, — him as the officers in the Army mostly dispose of their uniforms to, when hard pressed with debts of honour, if I may judge from their coats and epaulets diversifying the window with their backs towards the public. The same party bought in one lot the portmanteau, the bag, the desk, the dressing-case, the hat-box, the umbrella, strap, and walking-stick. On my remarking that I should have thought those articles not quite in his line, he said, "No more ith a man'th grandmother, Mithter Chrithtopher; but if any man will bring hith grandmother here, and offer her at a fair trifle below what the 'll feth with good luck when the 'th thcoured and turned, I 'll buy her!"

These transactions brought me home, and, indeed, more than home, for they left a goodish profit on the original investment. And now there remained the writings; and the writings I particular wish to bring under the candid attention of the reader.

I wish to do so without postponement, for this reason. That is to say, namely, viz. *i. e.* as follows, thus: Before I proceed to recount the mental sufferings of which I became the prey in consequence of the writings, and before following up that harrowing tale with a statement of the wonderful and impressive catastrophe, as thrilling in its nature as unlooked for in any other capacity, which crowned the ole and filled the cup of unexpectedness to overflowing, the writings themselves ought to stand forth to view. Therefore it is that they now come next. One word to introduce them, and I lay down my pen (I beg, my unassuming pen), until I take it up to trace the gloomy sequel of a mind with something on it.

He was a smeary writer, and wrote a dreadful bad hand. Utterly regardless of ink, he lavished it on every undeserving object, — on his clothes, his desk, his hat, the handle of his tooth-brush, his umbrella. Ink was found freely on the coffee-room carpet by No. 4 table, and two blots were on his restless couch. A reference to the document I have given entire will show that on the morning of the third of February, eighteen fifty-six, he procured his no less than fifth pen and paper. To whatever deplorable act of ungovernable composition he immolated those materials obtained from the bar, there is no doubt that the fatal deed was committed in bed, and that it left its evidences but too plainly, long afterwards, upon the pillow-case.

He had put no Heading to any of his writings. Alas! Was he likely to have a Heading without a Head, and where was his

when he took such things into it? In some cases, such Boots, he would appear to have hid the writings; thereby ring his style in greater obscurity. But his Boots was at pairs, — and no two of his writings can put in any claim so regarded. Here follows (not to give more specimens) was found in

CHAPTER II

HIS BOOTS

H! well then, Monsieur Mutuel! What do I know, what say? I assure you that he calls himself Monsieur The shman."

'ardon. But I think it is impossible," said Monsieur el, — a spectacled, snuffy, stooping old gentleman in car-oes, and a cloth cap with a peaked shade, a loose blue coat reaching to his heels, a large, limp white shirt-frill, avat to correspond, — that is to say, white was the natural of his linen on Sundays, but it toned down with the

t is," repeated Monsieur Mutuel, his amiable old walnut-countenance very walnut-shelly indeed as he smiled and d in the bright morning sunlight, — "it is, my cherished me Bouclet, I think, impossible!"

ley!" (with a little vexed cry and a great many tosses of ead.) "But it is not impossible that you are a Pig!" ed Madame Bouclet, a compact little woman of thirty-five "See then. — look there, — read! 'On the second floor ieur L'Anglais.' Is it not so?"

t is so," said Monsieur Mutuel.

ood. Continue your morning walk. Get out." Madame et dismissed him with a lively snap of her fingers.

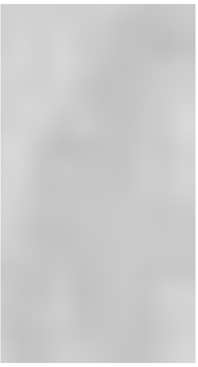
e morning walk of Monsieur Mutuel was in the brightest that the sun made in the Grande Place of a dull old for-French town. The manner of his morning walk was with nds crossed behind him: an umbrella, in figure the express of himself, always in one hand; a snuff-box in the other. with the shuffling gait of the elephant (who really de-with the very worst trousers-maker employed by the

ological world, and who appeared to have recommended him to Monsieur Mutuel), the old gentleman sunned himself daily when sun was to be had — of course, at the same time sunning a red ribbon at his button-hole; for was he not an ancient Frenchman?

Being told by one of the angelic sex to continue his morning walk and get out, Monsieur Mutuel laughed a walnut-shell laugh, pulled off his cap at arm's length with the hand that contained his snuff-box, kept it off for a considerable period after he had parted from Madame Bouclet, and continued his morning walk and got out, like a man of gallantry as he was.

The documentary evidence to which Madame Bouclet had referred Monsieur Mutuel was the list of her lodgers, sweetly written forth by her own Nephew and Book-keeper, who held the pen of an Angel, and posted up at the side of her gateway, for the information of the Police: "Au second, M. L'Anglais, Propriétaire." On the second floor, Mr. The Englishman, man of property. So it stood; nothing could be plainer.

Madame Bouclet now traced the line with her forefinger, as if it were to confirm and settle herself in her parting snap at Monsieur Mutuel, and so placing her right hand on her hip with a defiant air, as if nothing should ever tempt her to unsnap that snap, strolled out into the Place to glance up at the windows of Mr. The Englishman. That worthy happening to be looking out of window at the moment, Madame Bouclet gave him a graceful salutation with her head, looked to the right and looked to the left to account to him for her being there, considered for a moment, like one who accounted to herself for somebody she had expected not being there, and reentered her own gateway. Madame Bouclet let all her house giving on the Place in furnished flats or floors, and lived up the yard behind in company with Monsieur Bouclet her husband (great at billiards), an inherited brewing business, several fowls, two carts, a nephew, a little dog in a big kennel, a grape-vine, a counting-house, four horses, a married sister (with a share in the brewing business), the husband and two children of the married sister, a parrot, a drum (performed on by the little boy of the married sister), two billeted soldiers, a quantity of pigeons, a fife (played by the nephew in a ravishing manner), several domestics and supernumeraries, a perpetual flavour of coffee and soup, a terrible range of artificial rocks and wooden precipices at least four feet high, a small fountain, and half a dozen large sunflowers.



Now the Englishman, in taking his Appartemen one might say on our side of the Channel, his set of — had given his name correct to the letter, LANGLE he had a British way of not opening his mouth ve foreign soil, except at meals, the Brewery had be make nothing of it but L'Anglais. So Mr. The Eng had become and he remained.

"Never saw such a people!" muttered Mr. The Englishman, as he now looked out of window. "Never did in my life!"

This was true enough, for he had never before been out of his own country, — a right little island, a tight little island, a bright little island, a show-fight little island, and full of merit of all sorts; but not the whole round world.

"These chaps," said Mr. The Englishman to himself, as his eye rolled over the Place, sprinkled with military here and there, "are no more like soldiers" — Nothing being sufficiently strong for the end of his sentence, he left it unended.

This, again (from the point of view of his experience), was strictly correct; for though there was a great agglomeration of soldiers in the town and neighbouring country, you might have held a grand Review and Field-day of them every one, and looked in vain among them all for a soldier choking behind his foolish stock, or a soldier lamed by his ill-fitting shoes, or a soldier deprived of the use of his limbs by straps and buttons, or a soldier elaborately forced to be self-helpless in all the small affairs of life. A swarm of brisk, bright, active, bustling, handy, odd, skirmishing fellows, able to turn cleverly at anything, from a siege to soup, from great guns to needles and thread, from the broadsword exercise to slicing an onion, from making war to making omelets, was all you would have found.

What a swarm! From the Great Place under the eye of Mr. The Englishman, where a few awkward squads from the last conscription were doing the goose-step — some members of those squads still, as to their bodies, in the chrysalis peasant-state of Blouse, and only military butterflies as to their regimentally clothed legs, — from the Great Place, away outside the fortifications, and away for miles along the dusty roads, soldiers swarmed. All day long, upon the grass-grown ramparts of the town, practising soldiers trumpeted and bugled; all day long, down in angles of dry trenches, practising soldiers drummed and

drummed. Every forenoon soldiers burst out of the great barracks into the sandy gymnasium-ground hard by, and flew over the wooden horse, and hung on to flying ropes, and dangled upside down between parallel bars, and shot themselves off wooden platforms, — splashes, sparks, coruscations, showers of soldiers. At every corner of the town wall, every guard-house, every gateway, every sentry-box, every drawbridge, every reedy ditch, and rushy dyke, soldiers, soldiers, soldiers. And the town being pretty well all wall, guard-house, gateway, sentry-box, drawbridge, reedy ditch, and rushy dyke, the town was pretty well all soldiers.

What would the sleepy old town have been without the soldiers, seeing that even with them it had so overslept itself as to have slept its echoes hoarse, its defensive bars and locks and bolts and chains all rusty, and its ditches stagnant? From the days when VAUBAN engineered it to that perplexing extent that to look at it was like being knocked on the head with it, the stranger becoming stunned and stertorous under the shock of its incomprehensibility, — from the days when VAUBAN made it the express incorporation of every substantive and adjective in the art of military engineering, and not only twisted you into it and twisted you out of it, to the right, to the left, opposite, under here, over there, in the dark, in the dirt, by the gateway, archway, covered way, dry way, wet way, fosse, portcullis, drawbridge, sluice, squat tower, pierced wall, and heavy battery, but likewise took a fortifying dive under the neighbouring country, and came to the surface three or four miles off, blowing out incomprehensible mounds and batteries among the quiet crops of chicory and beet-root, — from those days to these the town had been asleep, and dust and rust and must had settled on its drowsy Arsenals and Magazines, and grass had grown up in its silent streets.

On market-days alone, its Great Place suddenly leaped out of bed. On market-days some friendly enchanter struck his staff upon the stones of the Great Place, and instantly arose the gayest booths and stalls, and sittings and standings, and a pleasant hum of chaffering and huckstering from many hundreds of tongues, and a pleasant, though peculiar, blending of colours, — white caps, blue blouses, and green vegetables, — and at last the Knight destined for the adventure seemed to have come in earnest, and all the Vaubanois sprang up awake. And now, by

long, low-lying avenues of trees, jolting in white-hoc cart, and on donkey-back, and in tumbril and m, cart and cabriolet, and afoot with barrow and bu en, — along the dykes and ditches and canals, in little ak-prowed country boats, — came peasant men and women in flocks and crowds, bringing articles for sale. And here you had boots and shoes, and sweetmeats and stuffs to wear, and here (in the cool shade of the Town Hall) you had milk and cream and butter and cheese, and here you had fruits and onions and carrots, and all things needful for your soup, and here you had poultry and flowers and protesting pigs, and here new shovels, axes, spades, and bill-hooks for your farming work, and here huge mounds of bread, and here your unground grain in sacks, and here your children's dolls, and here the cake-seller, announcing his wares by beat and roll of drum. And hark! fanfaronade of trumpets, and here into the Great Place, resplendent in an open carriage, with four gorgeously attired servitors up behind, playing horns, drums, and cymbals, rolled "the Daughter of a Physician" in massive golden chains and earrings, and blue-feathered hat, shaded from the admiring sun by two immense umbrellas of artificial roses, to dispense (from motives of philanthropy) that small and pleasant dose which had cured so many thousands! Toothache, earache, headache, heartache, stomachache, debility, nervousness, fits, fainting, fever, ague, all equally cured by the small and pleasant dose of the great Physician's great daughter! The process was this, — she, the Daughter of a Physician, proprietress of the superb equipage you now admired, with its confirmatory blasts of trumpet, drum, and cymbal, told you so: On the first day after taking the small and pleasant dose, you would feel no particular influence beyond a most harmonious sensation of indescribable and irresistible joy; on the second day you would be so astonishingly better that you would think yourself changed into somebody else; on the third day you would be entirely free from your disorder, whatever its nature and however long you had had it, and would seek out the Physician's Daughter to throw yourself at her feet, kiss the hem of her garment, and buy as many more of the small and pleasant doses as by the sale of all your few effects you could obtain; but she would be inaccessible, — gone for herbs to the Pyramids of Egypt, — and you wo (though cured) reduced to despair! Thus would the Ph

Daughter drive her trade (and briskly too), and thus would the buying and selling and mingling of tongues and colours continue, until the changing sunlight, leaving the Physician's Daughter in the shadow of high roofs, admonished her to jolt out westward, with a departing effect of gleam and glitter on the splendid equipage and brazen blast. And now the enchanter struck his staff upon the stones of the Great Place once more, and down went the booths, the sittings and standings, and vanished the merchandise, and with it the barrows, donkeys, donkey-carts, and tumbrils, and all other things on wheels and feet, except the slow scavengers with unwieldy carts and meagre horses clearing up the rubbish, assisted by the sleek town pigeons, better plumped out than on non-market-days. While there was yet an hour or two to wane before the autumn sunset, the loiterer outside town gate and drawbridge, and postern and double-ditch, would see the last white-hooded cart lessening in the avenue of lengthening shadows of trees, or the last country boat, paddled by the last market-woman on her way home, showing black upon the reddening long, low, narrow dyke between him and the mill; and as the paddle-parted scum and weed closed over the boat's track, he might be comfortably sure that its sluggish rest would be troubled no more until next market-day.

As it was not one of the Great Place's days for getting out of bed, when Mr. The Englishman looked down at the young soldiers practising the goose-step there, his mind was left at liberty to take a military turn.

"These fellows are billeted everywhere about," said he; "and to see them lighting the people's fires, boiling the people's pots, minding the people's babies, rocking the people's cradles, washing the people's greens, and making themselves generally useful, in every sort of unmilitary way, is most ridiculous! Never saw such a set of fellows,—never did in my life!"

All perfectly true again. Was there not Private Valentine in that very house, acting as sole housemaid, valet, cook, steward, and nurse in the family of his captain, Monsieur le Capitaine de la Cour,—cleaning the floors, making the beds, doing the marketing, dressing the captain, dressing the dinners, dressing the salads, and dressing the baby, all with equal readiness? Or, to put him aside, he being in loyal attendance on his Chief, was there not Private Hyppolite, billeted at the Per

fumer's two hundred yards off, who, when not on teered to keep shop while the fair Perfumeress st speak to a neighbour or so, and laughingly sold s war-sword girded on him? Was there not Emil the Clockmaker's, perpetually turning to of an e his coat off, winding up the stock? Was there billeted at the Tinman's, cultivating, pipe in mou gar four feet square, for the Tinman, in the little cou ind shop, and extorting the fruits of the earth from sam his knees, with the sweat of his brow? Not d examples, was there not Baptiste, billeted on the Wa carrier, at that very instant sitting on the paveme the light, with his martial legs asunder, and one o he Wa carrier's spare pails between them, which (to the delight glory of the heart of the Water-carrier coming across the Pla from the fountain, yoked and burdened) he was painting brigh green outside and bright red within? Or, to go no farther than the Barber's at the very next door, was there not Corporal Théophile —

"No," said Mr. The Englishman, glancing down at the Barber's, "he is not there at present. There's the child, though."

A mere mite of a girl stood on the steps of the Barber's shop, looking across the Place. A mere baby, one might call her, dressed in the close white linen cap which small French country children wear (like the children in Dutch pictures), and in a frock of homespun blue, that had no shape except where it was tied round her little fat throat. So that, being naturally short and round all over, she looked, behind, as if she had been cut off at her natural waist, and had had her head neatly fitted on it.

"There's the child, though."

To judge from the way in which the dimpled hand was rubbing the eyes, the eyes had been closed in a nap, and were newly opened. But they seemed to be looking so intently across the Place, that the Englishman looked in the same direction.

"Oh!" said he presently. "I thought as much. The Corporal 's there."

The Corporal, a smart figure of a man of thirty, perhaps a thought under the middle size, but very neatly made, — a sun-

burnt Corporal with a brown peaked beard, — faced about at the moment, addressing voluble words of instruction to the squad in hand. Nothing was amiss or awry about the Corporal. A lithe and nimble Corporal, quite complete, from the sparkling dark eyes under his knowing uniform cap to his sparkling white gaiters. The very image and presentment of a Corporal of his country's army, in the line of his shoulders, the line of his waist, the broadest line of his Bloomer trousers, and their narrowest line at the calf of his leg.

Mr. The Englishman looked on, and the child looked on, and the Corporal looked on (but the last-named at his men), until the drill ended a few minutes afterwards, and the military sprinkling dried up directly, and was gone. Then said Mr. The Englishman to himself, "Look here! By George!" And the Corporal, dancing towards the Barber's with his arms wide open, caught up the child, held her over his head in a flying attitude, caught her down again, kissed her, and made off with her into the Barber's house.

Now Mr. The Englishman had had a quarrel with his erring and disobedient and disowned daughter, and there was a child in that case too. Had not his daughter been a child, and had she not taken angel flights above his head as this child had flown above the Corporal's?

"He's a" — National Participled — "fool!" said the Englishman, and shut his window.

But the windows of the house of Memory, and the windows of the house of Mercy, are not so easily closed as windows of glass and wood. They fly open unexpectedly; they rattle in the night; they must be nailed up. Mr. The Englishman had tried nailing them, but had not driven the nails quite home. So he passed but a disturbed evening and a worse night.

By nature a good tempered man? No; very little gentleness, confounding the quality with weakness. Fierce and wrathful when crossed? Very, and stupendously unreasonable. Moody? Exceedingly so. Vindictive? Well; he had had scowling thoughts that he would formally curse his daughter, as he had seen it done on the stage. But remembering that the real Heaven is some paces removed from the mock one in the great chandelier of the Theatre, he had given that up.

And he had come abroad to be rid of his repudiated daughter for the rest of his life. And here he was.

At bottom, it was for this reason, more than fo… that Mr. The Englishman took it extremely ill th… Théophile should be so devoted to little Bebelle, ne… the Barber's shop. In an unlucky moment he had chanced to say to himself, "Why, confound the fellow, he is not her father!" There was a sharp sting in the speech which ra… into him suddenly, and put him in a worse mood. So he ha… National Participled the unconscious Corporal with most hearty emphasis, and had made up his mind to think no more abou… such a mountebank.

But it came to pass that the Corporal was not to be dismissed. If he had known the most delicate fibres of the Englishman's mind, instead of knowing nothing on earth about him, and if he had been the most obstinate Corporal in the Grand Army of France, instead of being the most obliging, he could not have planted himself with more determined immovability plump in the midst of all the Englishman's thoughts. Not only so, but he seemed to be always in his view. Mr. The Englishman had but to look out of window, to look upon the Corporal with little Bebelle. He had but to go for a walk, and there was the Corporal walking with Bebelle. He had but to come home again, disgusted, and the Corporal and Bebelle were at home before him. If he looked out at his back windows early in the morning, the Corporal was in the Barber's back yard, washing and dressing and brushing Bebelle. If he took refuge at his front windows, the Corporal brought his breakfast out into the Place, and shared it there with Bebelle. Always Corporal and always Bebelle. Never Corporal without Bebelle. Never Bebelle without Corporal.

Mr. The Englishman was not particularly strong in the French language as a means of oral communication, though he read it very well. It is with languages as with people, — when you only know them by sight, you are apt to mistake them; you must be on speaking terms before you can be said to have established an acquaintance.

For this reason, Mr. The Englishman had to gird up his loins considerably before he could bring himself to the point of exchanging ideas with Madame Bouclet on the subject of this Corporal and this Bebelle. But Madame Bouclet looking in apologetically one morning to remark that, O Heav… was in a state of desolation because the lamp-mak…

sent home that lamp confided to him to repair, but that truly he was a lamp-maker against whom the whole world shrieked out, Mr. The Englishman seized the occasion.

"Madame, that baby —"

"Pardon, monsieur. That lamp."

"No, no, that little girl."

"But, pardon!" said Madame Bouclet, angling for a clue, "one cannot light a little girl, or send her to be repaired?"

"The little girl — at the house of the Barber."

"Ah-h-h!" cried Madame Bouclet, suddenly catching the idea with her delicate little line and rod. "Little Bebelle! yes, yes, yes! And her friend the Corporal? Yes, yes, yes, yes! So genteel of him, — is it not?"

"He is not — ?"

"Not at all; not at all! He is not one of her relations. Not at all!"

"Why then, he —"

"Perfectly!" cried Madame Bouclet, "you are right, monsieur. It is so genteel of him. The less relation, the more genteel. As you say."

"Is she — ?"

"The child of the Barber?" Madame Bouclet whisked up her skilful little line and rod again. "Not at all, not at all. She is the child of — in a word, of no one."

"The wife of the Barber, then — ?"

"Indubitably. As you say. The wife of the Barber receives a small stipend to take care of her. So much by the month. Eh, then! It is without doubt very little, for we are all poor here."

"You are not poor, madame."

"As to my lodgers," replied Madame Bouclet, with a smiling and a gracious bend of her head, "no. As to all things else, so-so."

"You flatter me, madame."

"Monsieur, it is you who flatter me in living here."

Certain fishy gasps on Mr. The Englishman's part, denoting that he was about to resume his subject under difficulties, Madame Bouclet observed him closely, and whisked up her delicate line and rod again with triumphant success.

"Oh no, monsieur, certainly not! The wife of the Barber is not cruel to the poor child, but she is careless. Her health is delicate, and she sits all day looking out at window. Conse-

quently, when the Corporal first came, the poor little Bebelle was much neglected."

"It is a curious —" began Mr. The Englishman.

"Name? That Bebelle? Again you are right, monsieur. But it is a playful name for Gabrielle."

"And so the child is a mere fancy of the Corporal's?" said Mr. The Englishman in a gruffly disparaging tone of voice.

"Eh, well!" returned Madame Bouclet, with a pleading shrug; "one must love something. Human nature is weak."

("Devilish weak!" muttered the Englishman in his own language).

"And the Corporal," pursued Madame Bouclet, "being billeted at the Barber's, — where he will probably remain a long time, for he is attached to the General, — and finding the poor unowned child in need of being loved, and finding himself in need of loving, — why, there you have it all, you see!"

Mr. The Englishman accepted this interpretation of the matter with an indifferent grace, and observed to himself, in an injured manner, when he was again alone: "I should n't mind it so much, if these people were not such a" — National Participled — "sentimental people!"

There was a cemetery outside the town, and it happened ill for the reputation of the Vaubanois, in this sentimental connection, that he took a walk there that same afternoon. To be sure there were some wonderful things in it (from the Englishman's point of view), and of a certainty in all Britain you would have found nothing like it. Not to mention the fanciful flourishes of hearts and crosses in wood and iron, that were planted all over the place, making it look very like a firework ground, where a most splendid pyrotechnic display might be expected after dark, there were so many wreaths upon the graves, embroidered, as it might be, "To my mother," "To my daughter," "To my father," "To my brother," "To my sister," "To my friend," and those many wreaths were in so many stages of elaboration and decay, from the wreath of yesterday, all fresh colour and bright beads, to the wreath of last year, a poor mouldering wisp of straw! There were so many little gardens and grottoes made upon graves, in so many tastes, with plants and shells and plaster figures and porcelain pitchers, and so many odds and ends! There were so many tributes of remembrance hanging up, not to be discriminated by the closest inspection from little round

waiters, whereon were depicted in glowing hues either a lady or a gentleman with a white pocket-handkerchief out of all proportion, leaning, in a state of the most faultless mourning and most profound affliction, on the most architectural and gorgeous urn! There were so many surviving wives who had put their names on the tombs of their deceased husbands, with a blank for the date of their own departure from this weary world; and there were so many surviving husbands who had rendered the same homage to their deceased wives; and out of the number there must have been so many who had long ago married again! In fine, there was so much in the place that would have seemed mere frippery to a stranger, save for the consideration that the lightest paper flower that lay upon the poorest heap of earth was never touched by a rude hand, but perished there, a sacred thing!

"Nothing of the solemnity of Death here," Mr. The Englishman had been going to say, when this last consideration touched him with a mild appeal, and on the whole he walked out without saying it. "But these people are," he insisted, by way of compensation, when he was well outside the gate, "they are so — Participled — 'sentimental!'"

His way back lay by the military gymnasium ground. And there he passed the Corporal glibly instructing young soldiers how to swing themselves over rapid and deep watercourses on their way to Glory, by means of a rope, and himself deftly plunging off a platform, and flying a hundred feet or two, as an encouragement to them to begin. And there he also passed, perched on a crowning eminence (probably by the Corporal's careful hands), the small Bebelle, with her round eyes wide open, surveying the proceeding like a wondering sort of blue and white bird.

"If that child was to die," this was his reflection as he turned his back and went his way, — "and it would almost serve the fellow right for making such a fool of himself, — I suppose we should have *him* sticking up a wreath and a waiter in that fantastic burying ground."

Nevertheless, after another early morning or two of looking out of window, he strolled down into the Place, when the Corporal and Bebelle were walking there, and, touching his hat to the Corporal (an immense achievement), wished him Good Day.

"Good day, monsieur."

"This is a rather pretty child you have here," s[illegible] [illegible]nglishman, taking her chin in his hand, and lookin[illegible] [illegible] er astonished blue eyes.

"Monsieur, she is a very pretty child," returned the Corporal, ith a stress on his polite correction of the phrase.

"And good?" said the Englishman.

"And very good. Poor little thing!"

"Hah!" The Englishman stooped down and patted her heek, not without awkwardness, as if he were going too far in is conciliation. "And what is this medal round your neck, y little one?"

Bebelle having no other reply on her lips than her chubby ight fist, the Corporal offered his services as interpreter.

"Monsieur demands, what is this, Bebelle?"

"It is the Holy Virgin," said Bebelle.

"And who gave it you?" asked the Englishman.

"Théophile."

"And who is Théophile?"

Bebelle broke into a laugh, laughed merrily and heartily, lapped her chubby hands, and beat her little feet on the stone avement of the Place.

"He does n't know Théophile! Why, he does n't know any ne! He does n't know anything!" Then, sensible of a small olecism in her manners, Bebelle twisted her right hand in a leg f the Corporal's Bloomer trousers, and, laying her cheek against he place, kissed it.

"Monsieur Théophile, I believe?" said the Englishman to he Corporal.

"It is I, monsieur."

"Permit me." Mr. The Englishman shook him heartily by he hand and turned away. But he took it mighty ill that old lonsieur Mutuel in his patch of sunlight, upon whom he came s he turned, should pull off his cap to him with a look of leased approval. And he muttered, in his own tongue, as he eturned the salutation, "Well, walnut-shell! And what busi-ess is it of *yours?*"

Mr. The Englishman went on for many weeks passing but isturbed evenings and worse nights, and constantly experien-ing that those aforesaid windows in the houses of Memory and lercy rattled after dark, and that he had very imperfectly ailed them up. Likewise, he went on for many weeks daily

improving the acquaintance of the Corporal and Bebelle. That is to say, he took Bebelle by the chin, and the Corporal by the hand, and offered Bebelle sous and the Corporal cigars, and even got the length of changing pipes with the Corporal and kissing Bebelle. But he did it all in a shamefaced way, and always took it extremely ill that Monsieur Mutuel in his patch of sunlight should note what he did. Whenever that seemed to be the case, he always growled in his own tongue, "There you are again, walnut-shell! What business is it of *yours*?"

In a word, it had become the occupation of Mr. The Englishman's life to look after the Corporal and little Bebelle, and to resent old Monsieur Mutuel's looking after *him*. An occupation only varied by a fire in the town one windy night, and much passing of water-buckets from hand to hand (in which the Englishman rendered good service), and much beating of drums,—when all of a sudden the Corporal disappeared.

Next, all of a sudden, Bebelle disappeared.

She had been visible a few days later than the Corporal,—sadly deteriorated as to washing and brushing,—but she had not spoken when addressed by Mr. The Englishman, and had looked scared and had run away. And now it would seem that she had run away for good. And there lay the Great Place under the windows, bare and barren.

In his shamefaced and constrained way, Mr. The Englishman asked no question of any one, but watched from his front windows and watched from his back windows, and lingered about the Place, and peeped in at the Barber's shop, and did all this and much more, with a whistling and tune-humming pretence of not missing anything, until one afternoon when Monsieur Mutuel's patch of sunlight was in shadow, and when, according to all rule and precedent, he had no right whatever to bring his red ribbon out of doors, behold here he was, advancing with his cap already in his hand, twelve paces off!

Mr. The Englishman had got as far into his usual objurgation as, "What business—" when he checked himself.

"Ah, it is sad, it is sad! Hélas, it is unhappy, it is sad!" Thus old Monsieur Mutuel, shaking his grey head.

"What business—at least, I would say, what do you mean, Monsieur Mutuel?"

"Our Corporal. Hélas, our dear Corporal!"

"What has happened to him?"

"You have not heard?"

"No."

"At the fire. But he was so brave, so ready. Ah, too brave, too ready!"

"May the Devil carry you away!" the Englishman broke in impatiently. "I beg your pardon, — I mean me, — I am not accustomed to speak French, — go on, will you?"

"And a falling beam —"

"Good God!" exclaimed the Englishman. "It was a private soldier who was killed?"

"No. A Corporal, the same Corporal, our dear Corporal. Beloved by all his comrades. The funeral ceremony was touching — penetrating. Monsieur The Englishman, your eyes fill with tears."

"What bu—si—"

"Monsieur The Englishman, I honour those emotions. I salute you with profound respect. I will not obtrude myself upon your noble heart."

Monsieur Mutuel, — a gentleman in every thread of his cloudy linen, under whose wrinkled hand every grain in the quarter of an ounce of poor snuff in his poor little tin box became a gentleman's property, — Monsieur Mutuel passed on, with his cap in his hand.

"I little thought," said the Englishman, after walking for several minutes, and more than once blowing his nose, "when I was looking round that cemetery — I'll go there!"

Straight he went there, and when he came within the gate he paused, considering whether he should ask at the lodge for some direction to the grave. But he was less than ever in a mood for asking questions, and he thought, "I shall see something on it to know it by."

In search of the Corporal's grave he went softly on, up this walk and down that, peering in, among the crosses and hearts and columns and obelisks and tombstones, for a recently disturbed spot. It troubled him now to think how many dead there were in the cemetery, — he had not thought them a tenth part so numerous before, — and, after he had walked and sought for some time, he said to himself, as he struck down a new vista of tombs, "I might suppose that every one was dead but I."

Not every one. A live child was lying on the ground asleep.

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Truly he had found something on the Corporal's grave to know it by, and the something was Bebelle.

With such a loving will had the dead soldier's comrades worked at his resting-place that it was already a neat garden. On the green turf of the garden Bebelle lay sleeping, with her cheek touching it. A plain, unpainted little wooden Cross was planted in the turf, and her short arm embraced this little Cross, as it had many a time embraced the Corporal's neck. They had put a tiny flag (the flag of France) at his head, and a laurel garland.

Mr. The Englishman took off his hat, and stood for awhile silent. Then, covering his head again, he bent down on one knee, and softly roused the child.

"Bebelle! My little one!"

Opening her eyes, on which the tears were still wet, Bebelle was at first frightened; but seeing who it was, she suffered him to take her in his arms, looking steadfastly at him.

"You must not lie here, my little one. You must come with me."

"No, no. I can't leave Théophile. I want the good dear Théophile."

"We will go and seek him, Bebelle. We will go and look for him in England. We will go and look for him at my daughter's, Bebelle."

"Shall we find him there?"

"We shall find the best part of him there. Come with me, poor forlorn little one! Heaven is my witness," said the Englishman, in a low voice, as, before he rose, he touched the turf above the gentle Corporal's breast, "that I thankfully accept this trust!"

It was a long way for the child to have come unaided. She was soon asleep again, with her embrace transferred to the Englishman's neck. He looked at her worn shoes, and her galled feet, and her tired face, and believed that she had come there every day.

He was leaving the grave with the slumbering Bebelle in his arms, when he stopped, looked wistfully down at it, and looked wistfully at the other graves around. "It is the innocent custom of the people," said Mr. The Englishman with hesitation. "I think I should like to do it. No one sees."

Careful not to wake Bebelle as he went, he repaired to the lodge where such little tokens of remembrance were sold, and bought two wreaths. One, blue and white and glistening silver, "To my friend;" one of a soberer red and black and yellow, "To my friend." With these he went back to the grave, and so down on one knee again. Touching the child's lips with the brighter wreath, he guided her hand to hang it on the Cross; then hung his own wreath there. After all, the wreaths were not far out of keeping with the little garden. To my friend. To my friend.

Mr. The Englishman took it very ill when he looked round a street corner into the Great Place, carrying Bebelle in his arms, that old Mutuel should be there airing his red ribbon. He took a world of pains to dodge the worthy Mutuel, and devoted a surprising amount of time and trouble to skulking into his own lodging like a man pursued by Justice. Safely arrived there at last, he made Bebelle's toilet with as accurate a remembrance as he could bring to bear upon that work of the way in which he had often seen the poor Corporal make it, and, having given her to eat and drink, laid her down on his own bed. Then he slipped out into the Barber's shop, and after a brief interview with the Barber's wife, and a brief recourse to his purse and card-case, came back again with the whole of Bebelle's personal property in such a very little bundle that it was quite lost under his arm.

As it was irreconcilable with his own course and character that he should carry Bebelle off in state, or receive any compliments or congratulations on that feat, he devoted the next day to getting his two portmanteaus out of the house by artfulness and stealth, and to comporting himself in every particular as if he were going to run away, — except, indeed, that he paid his few debts in the town, and prepared a letter to leave for Madame Bouclet, inclosing a sufficient sum of money in lieu of notice. A railway train would come through at midnight, and by that train he would take away Bebelle to look for Théophile in England and at his forgiven daughter's.

At midnight, on a moonlight night, Mr. The Englishman came creeping forth like a harmless assassin, with Bebelle on his breast instead of a dagger. Quiet the Great Place, and quiet the never-stirring streets; closed the cafés; huddled together motionless their billiard balls; drowsy the guard or

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sentinel on duty here and there; lulled for the time, by sleep, even the insatiate appetite of the Office of Town-Dues.

Mr. The Englishman left the Place behind, and left the streets behind, and left the civilian-inhabited town behind, and descended down among the military works of Vauban, hemming all in. As the shadow of the first heavy arch and postern fell upon him and was left behind, as the shadow of the second heavy arch and postern fell upon him and was left behind, as his hollow tramp over the first drawbridge was succeeded by a gentler sound, as his hollow tramp over the second drawbridge was succeeded by a gentler sound, as he overcame the stagnant ditches one by one, and passed out where the flowing waters were and where the moonlight, so the dark shades and the hollow sounds and the unwholesomely locked currents of his soul were vanquished and set free. See to it, Vaubans of your own hearts, who gird them in with triple walls and ditches, and with bolt and chain and bar and lifted bridge, — raze those fortifications, and lay them level with the all-absorbing dust, before the night cometh when no hand can work!

All went prosperously, and he got into an empty carriage in the train, where he could lay Bebelle on the seat over against him, as on a couch, and cover her from head to foot with his mantle. He had just drawn himself up from perfecting this arrangement, and had just leaned back in his own seat contemplating it with great satisfaction, when he became aware of a curious appearance at the open carriage window, — a ghostly little tin box floating up in the moonlight, and hovering there.

He leaned forward and put out his head. Down among the rails and wheels and ashes, Monsieur Mutuel, red ribbon and all!

"Excuse me, Monsieur The Englishman," said Monsieur Mutuel, holding up his box at arm's length, the carriage being so high and he so low, "but I shall reverence the little box for ever, if your so generous hand will take a pinch from it at parting."

Mr. The Englishman reached out of the window before complying, and — without asking the old fellow what business it was of his — shook hands and said, "Adieu! God bless you!"

"And, Mr. The Englishman, God bless you!" cried Madame Bouclet, who was also there among the rails and wheels and ashes. "And God will bless you in the happiness of the

protected child now with you. And God will bless you in your own child at home. And God will bless you in your own remembrances. And this from me!"

He had barely time to catch a bouquet from her hand, when the train was flying through the night. Round the paper that infolded it was bravely written (doubtless by the nephew who held the pen of an Angel), "Homage to the friend of the friendless."

"Not bad people, Bebelle!" said Mr. The Englishman, softly drawing the mantle a little from her sleeping face, that he might kiss it, "though they are so —"

Too "sentimental" himself at the moment to be able to get out that word, he added nothing but a sob, and travelled for some miles, through the moonlight, with his hand before his eyes.

CHAPTER III

HIS BROWN-PAPER PARCEL

My works are well known. I am a young man in the Art line. You have seen my works many a time, though it 's fifty thousand to one if you have seen me. You say you don't want to see me? You say your interest is in my works, and not in me? Don't be too sure about that. Stop a bit.

Let us have it down in black and white at the first go off, so that there may be no unpleasantness or wrangling afterwards. And this is looked over by a friend of mine, a ticket writer, that is up to literature. I am a young man in the Art line — in the Fine-Art line. You have seen my works over and over again, and you have been curious about me, and you think you have seen me. Now, as a safe rule, you never have seen me, and you never do see me, and you never will see me. I think that 's plainly put — and it 's what knocks me over.

If there 's a blighted public character going, I am the party.

It has been remarked by a certain (or an uncertain) philosopher, that the world knows nothing of its greatest men. He might have put it plainer if he had thrown his eye in my direction. He might have put it, that while the world knows something of them that apparently go in and win, it knows nothing of them that really go in and don't win. There it is again in another form — and that 's what knocks me over.

Not that it's only myself that suffers from injustice, but that I am more alive to my own injuries than to any other man's. Being, as I have mentioned, in the Fine-Art line, and not the Philanthropic line, I openly admit it. As to company in injury, I have company enough. Who are you passing every day at your Competitive Excruciations? The fortunate candidates whose heads and livers you have turned upside down for life? Not you. You are really passing the Crammers and Coaches. If your principle is right, why don't you turn out to-morrow morning with the keys of your cities on velvet cushions, your musicians playing, and your flags flying, and read addresses to the Crammers and Coaches on your bended knees, beseeching them to come out and govern you? Then, again, as to your public business of all sorts, your Financial statements and your Budgets; the Public knows much, truly, about the real doing of all that! Your Nobles and Right Honourables are first-rate men? Yes, and so is a goose a first-rate bird. But I'll tell you this about the goose, — you'll find his natural flavour disappointing, without stuffing.

Perhaps I am soured by not being popular? But suppose I AM popular. Suppose my works never fail to attract. Suppose that, whether they are exhibited by natural light or artificial, they invariably draw the public. Then no doubt they are preserved in some Collection? No, they are not; they are not preserved in any Collection. Copyright? No, nor yet copyright. Anyhow they must be somewhere? Wrong again, for they are often nowhere.

Says you, "At all events, you are in a moody state of mind, my friend." My answer is, I have described myself as a public character with a blight upon him — which fully accounts for the curdling of the milk in *that* cocoanut.

Those that are acquainted with London are aware of a locality on the Surrey side of the river Thames, called the Obelisk, or more generally, the Obstacle. Those that are not acquainted with London will also be aware of it, now that I have named it. My lodging is not far from that locality. I am a young man of that easy disposition, that I lie abed till it's absolutely necessary to get up and earn something, and then I lie abed again till I have spent it.

It was on an occasion when I had had to turn to with a view to victuals, that I found myself walking along the Waterloo Road

one evening after dark, accompanied by an acquaintance and fellow-lodger in the gas-fitting way of life. He is very good company, having worked at the theatres, and, indeed, he has a theatrical turn himself, and wishes to be brought out in the character of Othello; but whether on account of his regular work always blacking his face and hands more or less, I cannot say.

"Tom," he says, "what a mystery hangs over you!"

"Yes, Mr. Click" — the rest of the house generally give him his name, as being first, front, carpeted all over, his own furniture, and if not mahogany, an out-and-out imitation, — "yes, Mr. Click, a mystery does hang over me."

"Makes you low, you see, don't it?" says he, eyeing me sideways.

"Why, yes, Mr. Click, there are circumstances connected with it that have," I yielded to a sigh, "a lowering effect."

"Gives you a touch of the misanthrope too, don't it?" says he. "Well, I'll tell you what. If I was you, I'd shake it off."

"If I was you, I would, Mr. Click; but if you was me, you would n't."

"Ah!" says he, "there's something in that."

When we had walked a little further, he took it up again by touching me on the chest.

"You see, Tom, it seems to me as if, in the words of the poet who wrote the domestic drama of The Stranger, you had a silent sorrow there."

"I have, Mr. Click."

"I hope, Tom," lowering his voice in a friendly way, "it is n't coining, or smashing?"

"No, Mr. Click. Don't be uneasy."

"Nor yet forg" — Mr. Click checked himself, and added, "counterfeiting anything, for instance?"

"No, Mr. Click. I am lawfully in the Art line — Fine-Art line — but I can say no more."

"Ah! Under a species of star? A kind of malignant spell? A sort of a gloomy destiny? A cankerworm pegging away at your vitals in secret, as well as I make it out?" said Mr. Click, eyeing me with some admiration.

I told Mr. Click that was about it, if we came to particulars; and I thought he appeared rather proud of me.

Our conversation had brought us to a crowd of people, the greater part struggling for a front place from which to see something on the pavement, which proved to be various designs executed in coloured chalks on the pavement-stones, lighted by two candles stuck in mud sconces. The subjects consisted of a fine fresh salmon's head and shoulders, supposed to have been recently sent home from the fishmonger's; a moonlight night at sea (in a circle); dead game; scroll-work; the head of a hoary hermit engaged in devout contemplation; the head of a pointer smoking a pipe; and a cherubim, his flesh creased as in infancy, going on a horizontal errand against the wind. All these subjects appeared to me to be exquisitely done.

On his knees on one side of this gallery, a shabby person of modest appearance, who shivered dreadfully (though it wasn't at all cold), was engaged in blowing the chalk-dust off the moon, toning the outline of the back of the hermit's head with a bit of leather, and fattening the down stroke of a letter or two in the writing. I have forgotten to mention that writing formed a part of the composition, and that it also — as it appeared to me — was exquisitely done. It ran as follows, in fine round characters: "An honest man is the noblest work of God. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0. £ s. d. Employment in an office is humbly requested. Honour the Queen. Hunger is a 0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 sharp thorn. Chip chop, cherry chop, fol de rol de ri do. Astronomy and mathematics. I do this to support my family."

Murmurs of admiration at the exceeding beauty of this performance went about among the crowd. The artist, having finished his touching (and having spoiled those places), took his seat on the pavement, with his knees crouched up very nigh to his chin; and halfpence began to rattle in.

"A pity to see a man of that talent brought so low, ain't it?" said one of the crowd to me.

"What he might have done in the coach-painting, or house-decorating!" said another man, who took up the first speaker because I did not.

"Why, he writes — alone — like the Lord Chancellor!" said another man.

"Better," said another. "I know *his* writing. *He* couldn't support his family this way."

Then a woman noticed the natural fluffiness of the hermit's

hair, and another woman, her friend, mentioned of gills that you could almost see him gasp. Then country gentleman stepped forward and asked the how he executed his work? And the modest mar scraps of brown paper with colours in 'em out of and showed them. Then a fair-complexioned d sandy hair and spectacles, asked if the hermit was To which the modest man, casting a sorrowful gla replied that it was, to a certain extent, a recolle father. This caused a boy to yelp out, "Is the Pi ing the pipe your mother?" who was immediately of view by a sympathetic carpenter with l his back.

At every fresh question or remark the crowd lean rw more eagerly, and dropped the halfpence more freely, and modest man gathered them up more meekly. At last, anoth elderly gentleman came to the front, and gave the artist his card, to come to his office to-morrow, and get some copying to do. The card was accompanied by a sixpence, and the artist was profoundly grateful, and, before he put the card in his hat, read it several times by the light of his candles to fix the address well in his mind, in case he should lose it. The crowd was deeply interested by this last incident, and a man in the second row with a gruff voice growled to the artist, "You 've got a chance in life now, ain't you?" The artist answered (sniffing in a very low-spirited way, however), "I 'm thankful to hope so." Upon which there was a general chorus of "*You* are all right," and the halfpence slackened very decidedly."

I felt myself pulled away by the arm, and Mr. Click and I stood alone at the corner of the next crossing.

"Why, Tom," said Mr. Click, "what a horrid expression of face you 've got!"

"Have I?" says I.

"Have you?" says Mr. Click. "Why, you looked as if you would have his blood."

"Whose blood?"

"The artist's."

"The artist's!" I repeated. And I laughed, frantically, wildly, gloomily, incoherently, disagreeably. I am sensible that I did. I know I did.

Mr. Click stared at me in a scared sort of a way, but said

nothing until we had walked a street's length. He then stopped short, and said, with excitement on the part of his fore-finger: —

"Thomas, I find it necessary to be plain with you. I don't like the envious man. I have identified the cankerworm that's pegging away at *your* vitals, and it's envy, Thomas."

"Is it?" says I.

"Yes, it is," says he. "Thomas, beware of envy. It is the green-eyed monster which never did and never will improve each shining hour, but quite the reverse. I dread the envious man, Thomas. I confess that I am afraid of the envious man, when he is so envious as you are. Whilst you contemplated the works of a gifted rival, and whilst you heard that rival's praises, and especially whilst you met his humble glance as he put that card away, your countenance was so malevolent as to be terrific. Thomas, I have heard of the envy of them that follows the Fine-Art line, but I never believed it could be what yours is. I wish you well, but I take my leave of you. And if you should ever get into trouble through knifeing — or say garrotting — a brother artist, as I believe you will, don't call me to character, Thomas, or I shall be forced to injure your case."

Mr. Click parted from me with those words, and we broke off our acquaintance.

I became enamoured. Her name was Henrietta. Contending with my easy disposition, I frequently got up to go after her. She also dwelt in the neighbourhood of the Obelisk, and I did fondly hope that no other would interpose in the way of our union.

To say that Henrietta was volatile is but to say that she was woman. To say that she was in the bonnet-trimming is feebly to express the taste which reigned predominant in her own.

She consented to walk with me. Let me do her the justice to say that she did so upon trial. "I am not," said Henrietta, "as yet prepared to regard you, Thomas, in any other light than as a friend; but as a friend I am willing to walk with you, on the understanding that softer sentiments may flow."

We walked.

Under the influence of Henrietta's beguilements, I now got out of bed daily. I pursued my calling with an industry before unknown, and it cannot fail to have been observed at that period, by those most familiar with the streets of London, that

there was a larger supply — But hold! The time is not yet come!

One evening in October I was walking with Henrietta, enjoying the cool breezes wafted over Vauxhall Bridge. After several slow turns, Henrietta gaped frequently (so inseparable from woman is the love of excitement), and said, "Let 's go home by Grosvenor Place, Piccadilly, and Waterloo" — localities, I may state for the information of the stranger and the foreigner, well known in London, and the last a Bridge.

"No. Not by Piccadilly, Henrietta," said I.

"And why not Piccadilly, for goodness' sake?" said Henrietta.

Could I tell her? Could I confess to the gloomy presentiment that overshadowed me? Could I make myself intelligible to her? No.

"I don't like Piccadilly, Henrietta."

"But I do," said she. "It 's dark now, and the long rows of lamps in Piccadilly after dark are beautiful. I *will* go to Piccadilly!"

Of course we went. It was a pleasant night, and there were numbers of people in the streets. It was a brisk night, but not too cold, and not damp. Let me darkly observe, it was the best of all nights — FOR THE PURPOSE.

As we passed the garden wall of the Royal Palace, going up Grosvenor Place, Henrietta murmured: —

"I wish I was a queen!"

"Why so, Henrietta?"

"I would make *you* Something," said she, and crossed her two hands on my arm, and turned away her head.

Judging from this that the softer sentiments alluded to above had begun to flow, I adapted my conduct to that belief. Thus happily we passed on into the detested thoroughfare of Piccadilly. On the right of that thoroughfare is a row of trees, the railing of the Green Park, and a fine, broad, eligible piece of pavement.

"Oh, my!" cried Henrietta presently. "There 's been an accident!"

I looked to the left, and said, "Where, Henrietta?"

"Not there, stupid!" said she. "Over by the Park railings. Where the crowd is. Oh, no, it 's not an accident, it 's something else to look at! What 's them lights?"

She referred to two lights twinkling low amongst the legs of the assemblage, two candles on the pavement.

"Oh, do come along!" cried Henrietta, skipping across the road with me. I hung back, but in vain. "Do let's look!"

Again, designs upon the pavement. Centre compartment, Mount Vesuvius going it (in a circle), supported by four oval compartments, severally representing a ship in heavy weather, a shoulder of mutton attended by two cucumbers, a golden harvest with distant cottage of proprietor, and a knife and fork after nature; above the centre compartment a bunch of grapes, and over the whole a rainbow. The whole, as it appeared to me, exquisitely done.

The person in attendance on these works of art was in all respects, shabbiness excepted, unlike the former personage. His whole appearance and manner denoted briskness. Though threadbare, he expressed to the crowd that poverty had not subdued his spirit, or tinged with any sense of shame this honest effort to turn his talents to some account. The writing which formed a part of his composition was conceived in a similarly cheerful tone. It breathed the following sentiments: "The writer is poor, but not despondent. To a British 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 Public he £ s. d. appeals. Honour to our brave Army! And also 0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 to our gallant Navy. BRITONS STRIKE the A B C D E F G writer in common chalks would be grateful for any suitable employment HOORAY! HURRAH!" The whole of this writing appeared to me to be exquisitely done.

But this man, in one respect like the last, though seeming to work hard at it with a great show of brown paper and rubbers, was only really fattening the down stroke of a letter here and there, or blowing the loose chalk off the rainbow, or toning the outside edge of the shoulder of mutton. Though he did this with the greatest confidence, he did it (as it struck me) in so ignorant a manner, and so spoilt everything he touched, that when he began upon the purple smoke from the chimney of the distant cottage of the proprietor of the golden harvest (which smoke was beautifully soft), I found myself saying aloud, without considering of it:—

"Let that alone, will you?"

"Halloa!" said the man next me in the crowd, jerking me roughly from him with his elbow; "why didn't you send a tele-

gram? If we had known you was coming, we'd have provided something better for you. You understand the man's work better than he does himself, don't you? Have you made your will? You're too clever to live long."

"Don't be hard upon the gentleman, sir," said the person in attendance on the works of art, with a twinkle in his eye as he looked at me; "he may chance to be an artist himself. If so, sir, he will have a fellow-feeling with me, sir, when I —" he adapted his action to his words as he went on, and gave a smart slap of his hands between each touch, working himself all the time about and about the composition — "when I lighten the bloom of my grapes — shade off the orange in my rainbow — dot the i of my Britons — throw a yellow light into my cow-cum-*ber* — insinuate another morsel of fat into my shoulder of mutton — dart another zigzag flash of lightning at my ship in distress!"

He seemed to do this so neatly, and was so nimble about it, that the halfpence came flying in.

"Thanks, generous public, thanks!" said the professor. "You will stimulate me to further exertions. My name will be found in the list of British Painters yet. I shall do better than this, with encouragement. I shall, indeed."

"You never can do better than that bunch of grapes," said Henrietta. "Oh, Thomas, them grapes!"

"Not better than *that*, lady? I hope for the time when I shall paint anything but your own bright eyes and lips equal to life."

"(Thomas, did you ever?) But it must take a long time, sir," said Henrietta, blushing, "to paint equal to that."

"I was 'prenticed to it, miss," said the young man, smartly touching up the composition — "'prenticed to it in the caves of Spain and Portingale, ever so long and two year over."

There was a laugh from the crowd; and a new man who had worked himself in next me, said, "He's a smart chap, too; ain't he?"

"And what a eye!" exclaimed Henrietta softly.

"Ah! He need have a eye," said the man.

"Ah! He just need," was murmured among the crowd.

"He couldn't come that 'ere burning mountain without a eye," said the man. He had got himself accepted as an authority, somehow, and everybody looked at his finger as it pointed

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out Vesuvius. "To come that effect in a general illumination would require a eye; but to come it with two dips — why, it's enough to blind him!"

That impostor, pretending not to have heard what was said, now winked to any extent with both eyes at once, as if the strain upon his sight was too much, and threw back his long hair — it was very long — as if to cool his fevered brow. I was watching him doing it, when Henrietta suddenly whispered, "O, Thomas, how horrid you look!" and pulled me out by the arm.

Remembering Mr. Click's words, I was confused when I retorted, "What do you mean by horrid?"

"Oh gracious! Why, you looked," said Henrietta, "as if you would have his blood."

I was going to answer, "So I would, for twopence — from his nose," when I checked myself and remained silent.

We returned home in silence. Every step of the way, the softer sentiments that had flowed, ebbed twenty mile an hour. Adapting my conduct to the ebbing, as I had done to the flowing, I let my arm drop limp, so as she could scarcely keep hold of it, and I wished her such a cold good night at parting, that I keep within the bounds of truth when I characterise it as a Rasper.

In the course of the next day I received the following document: —

Henrietta informs Thomas that my eyes are open to you. I must ever wish you well, but walking and us is separated by an unfathomable abyss. One so malignant to superiority — Oh that look at him! — can never never conduct HENRIETTA.

P. S. — To the altar.

Yielding to the easiness of my disposition, I went to bed for a week, after receiving this letter. During the whole of the time, London was bereft of the usual fruits of my labour. When I resumed it, I found that Henrietta was married to the artist of Piccadilly.

Did I say to the artist? What fell words were those, expressive of what a galling hollowness, of what a bitter mockery! I — I — I — am the artist. I was the real artist of Piccadilly, I was the real artist of the Waterloo Road, I am the only artist of all those pavement subjects which daily and nightly arouse

your admiration. I do 'em, and I let 'em out. T[illegible] an you behold with the papers of chalks and the rubbers, [illegible] the down-strokes of the writing and shading off the [illegible] man you give the credit to, the man you give t[illegible] money to, hires — yes! and I live to tell it! — hires those w[illegible] of art of me, and brings nothing to 'em but the candles.

Such is genius in a commercial country. I am not up to the shivering, I am not up to the liveliness, I am not up to the wanting-employment-in-an-office move; I am only up to originating and executing the work. In consequence of which you never see me; you think you see me when you see someb[illegible] else, and that somebody else is a mere Commercial charac[illegible]. The one seen by self and Mr. Click in the Waterloo Road can only write a single word, and that I taught him, and it's MULTIPLICATION — which you may see him execute upside down, because he can't do it the natural way. The one seen by self and Henrietta by the Green Park railings can just smear into existence the two ends of a rainbow, with his cuff and a rubber — if very hard put upon making a show — but he could no more come the arch of the rainbow, to save his life, than he could come the moonlight, fish, volcano, shipwreck, mutton, hermit, or any of my most celebrated effects.

To conclude as I began: if there's a blighted public character going, I am the party. And often as you have seen, do see, and will see, my Works, it's fifty thousand to one if you'll ever see me, unless, when the candles are burnt down and the Commercial character is gone, you should happen to notice a neglected young man perseveringly rubbing out the last traces of the pictures, so that nobody can renew the same. That's me.

CHAPTER IV

HIS WONDERFUL END

IT will have been, ere now, perceived that I sold the foregoing writings. From the fact of their being printed in these pages, the inference will, ere now, have been drawn by the reader (may I add, the gentle reader?) that I sold them to One who never yet — [1]

[1] The remainder of this complimentary sentence editorially struck out.

Having parted with the writings on most satisfactory terms, — for in opening negotiations with the present Journal, was I not placing myself in the hands of One of whom it may be said, in the words of Another,[1] — I resumed my usual functions. But I too soon discovered that peace of mind had fled from a brow which, up to that time, Time had merely took the hair off, leaving an unruffled expanse within.

It were superfluous to veil it, — the brow to which I allude is my own.

Yes, over that brow uneasiness gathered like the sable wing of the fabled bird, as — as no doubt will be easily identified by all right-minded individuals. If not, I am unable, on the spur of the moment, to enter into particulars of him. The reflection that the writings must now inevitably get into print, and that He might yet live and meet with them, sat like the Hag of Night upon my jaded form. The elasticity of my spirits departed. Fruitless was the Bottle, whether Wine or Medicine. I had recourse to both, and the effect of both upon my system was witheringly lowering.

In this state of depression, into which I subsided when I first began to revolve what could I ever say if He — the unknown — was to appear in the coffee-room and demand reparation, I one forenoon in this last November received a turn that appeared to be given me by the finger of Fate and Conscience, hand in hand. I was alone in the coffee-room, and had just poked the fire into a blaze, and was standing with my back to it, trying whether heat would penetrate with soothing influence to the Voice within, when a young man in a cap, of an intelligent countenance, though requiring his hair cut, stood before me.

"Mr. Christopher, the Head Waiter?"

"The same."

The young man shook his hair out of his vision, — which it impeded, — took a packet from his breast, and, handing it over to me, said, with his eye (or did I dream?) fixed with a deep meaning on me, "THE PROOFS."

Although I smelt my coat-tails singeing at the fire, I had not the power to withdraw them. The young man put the packet in my faltering grasp, and repeated, — let me do him the justice to add, with civility:

"The proofs. A. Y. R."

[1] The remainder of this complimentary sentence editorially struck out.

With those words he departed.

A. Y. R.? And You Remember. Was that hi At Your Risk. Were the letters short for *that* Anticipate Your Retribution. Did they stand for ing? Outdacious Youth Repent? But no; for th happily wanting, and the vowel here was a A.

I opened the packet, and found that its conten e t foregoing writings printed just as the reader (may discerning reader?) peruses them. In vain was th whisper, — A. Y. R., All the Year Round, — it cancel the Proofs. Too app having sold the Writings.

My wretchedness daily increased. I had not thought of th risk I ran, and the defying publicity I put my head into, un all was done, and all was in print. Give up the money to off the bargain and prevent the publication, I could not. My family was down in the world, Christmas was coming on, a brother in the hospital and a sister in the rheumatics could not be entirely neglected. And it was not only ins in the family that had told on the resources of one unaided Waitering; outs were not wanting. A brother out of a situation, and another brother out of money to meet an acceptance, and another brother out of his mind, and another brother out at New York (not the same, though it might appear so), had really and truly brought me to a stand, till I could turn myself round. I got worse and worse in my meditations, constantly reflecting, "The Proofs," and reflecting that when Christmas drew nearer, and the Proofs were published, there could be no safety from hour to hour but that He might confront me in the coffee-room, and in the face of day and his country demand his rights.

The impressive and unlooked-for catastrophe towards which I dimly pointed the reader (shall I add, the highly intellectual reader?) in my first remarks now rapidly approaches.

It was November still, but the last echoes of the Guy Foxes had long ceased to reverberate. We was slack, — several joints under our average mark, and wine, of course, proportionate. So slack had we become at last, that Beds Nos. 26, 27, 28, and 31, having took their six-o'clock dinners, and dozed over their respective pints, had drove away in their respective Hansoms for their respective Night Mail-trains and left us empty.

I had took the evening paper to No. 6 table, — which is warm and most to be preferred, — and, lost in the all-absorbing topics of the day, had dropped into a slumber. I was recalled to consciousness by the well-known intimation, "Waiter!" and replying, "Sir!" found a gentleman standing at No. 4 table. The reader (shall I add, the observant reader?) will please to notice the locality of the gentleman, — *at No. 4 table.*

He had one of the new-fangled uncollapsable bags in his hand (which I am against, for I don't see why you shouldn't collapse, while you are about it, as your fathers collapsed before you), and he said: —

"I want to dine, waiter. I shall sleep here to-night."

"Very good, sir. What will you take for dinner, sir?"

"Soup, bit of codfish, oyster sauce, and the joint."

"Thank you, sir."

I rang the chambermaid's bell; and Mrs. Pratchett marched in, according to custom, demurely carrying a lighted flat candle before her, as if she was one of a long public procession, all the other members of which was invisible.

In the mean while the gentleman had gone up to the mantel-piece, right in front of the fire, and had laid his forehead against the mantel-piece (which it is a low one, and brought him into the attitude of leap-frog), and had heaved a tremenjous sigh. His hair was long and lightish; and, when he laid his forehead against the mantel-piece, his hair all fell in a dusty fluff together over his eyes; and when he now turned round and lifted up his head again, it all fell in a dusty fluff together over his ears. This give him a wild appearance, similar to a blasted heath.

"Oh! The chambermaid. Ah!" He was turning something in his mind. "To be sure. Yes. I won't go up stairs now, if you will take my bag. It will be enough for the present to know my number. — Can you give me 24 B?"

(O Conscience, what a Adder art thou!)

Mrs. Pratchett allotted him the room, and took his bag to it. He then went back before the fire, and fell a biting his nails.

"Waiter!" biting between the words, "give me," bite, "pen and paper; and in five minutes," bite, "let me have, if you please," bite, "a," bite, "Messenger."

Unmindful of his waning soup, he wrote and sent off six

notes before he touched his dinner. Three were ... three West End. The City letters were to Cornhill, L... and Farringdon Street. The West End letters w... Marlborough Street, New Burlington Street, an... Everybody was systematically denied at every on... places, and there was not a vestige of any answer. ... porter whispered to me, when he came back with ... "All Booksellers."

But before then he had cleared off his dinner, and his ... of wine. He now — mark the concurrence with the doc... formerly given in full! — knocked a plate of biscuits of... table with his agitated elber (but without breakage), ... demanded boiling brandy and water.

Now fully convinced that it was Himself, I perspired with the utmost freedom. When he become flushed with the heated stimulant referred to, he again demanded pen and paper, and passed the succeeding two hours in producing a manuscript which he put in the fire when completed. He then went up to bed, attended by Mrs. Pratchett. Mrs. Pratchett (who was aware of my emotions) told me, on coming down, that she had noticed his eye rolling into every corner of the passages and staircase, as if in search of his Luggage, and that, looking back as she shut the door of 24 B, she perceived him with his coat already thrown off, immersing himself bodily under the bedstead, like a chimney-sweep before the application of machinery.

The next day — I forbear the horrors of that night — was a very foggy day in our part of London, insomuch that it was necessary to light the coffee-room gas. We were still alone, and no feverish words of mine can do justice to the fitfulness of his appearance as he sat at No. 4 table, increased by there being something wrong with the meter.

Having again ordered his dinner, he went out, and was out for the best part of two hours. Inquiring on his return whether any of the answers had arrived, and receiving an unqualified negative, his instant call was for mulligatawny, the cayenne pepper, and orange brandy.

Feeling that the mortal struggle was now at hand, I also felt that I must be equal to him, and with that view resolved that whatever he took I would take. Behind my partition, but keeping my eye on him over the curtain, I therefore operated on Mulligatawny, Cayenne Pepper, and Orange Brandy. And

"Dear Christopher, it should be gratifying to you to know that you are an instrument in the hands of Destiny. Because you *are*."

A passing something of a melancholy cast put it into my head to shake it, and to say, "Perhaps we all are."

"I don't mean that," he answered; "I don't take that wide range; I confine myself to the special case. Observe me well, my Christopher! Hopeless of getting rid, through any effort of my own, of any of the manuscripts among my Luggage, — all of which, send them where I would, were always coming back to me, — it is now some seven years since I left that Luggage here, on the desperate chance, either that the too, too faithful manuscripts would come back to me no more, or that some one less accursed than I might give them to the world. You follow me, my Christopher?"

"Pretty well, sir." I followed him so far as to judge that he had a weak head, and that the Orange, the Boiling, and Old Brown combined was beginning to tell. (The Old Brown, being heady, is best adapted to seasoned cases.)

"Years elapsed, and those compositions slumbered in dust. At length, Destiny, choosing her agent from all mankind, sent You here, Christopher, and lo! the Casket was burst asunder, and the Giant was free!"

He made hay of his hair after he said this, and he stood a-tiptoe.

"But," he reminded himself in a state of excitement, "we must sit up all night, my Christopher. I must correct these Proofs for the press. Fill all the inkstands, and bring me several new pens."

He smeared himself and he smeared the Proofs, the night through, to that degree that when Sol give him warning to depart (in a four-wheeler), few could have said which was them and which was him, and which was blots. His last instructions was, that I should instantly run and take his corrections to the office of the present Journal. I did so. They most likely will not appear in print, for I noticed a message being brought round from Beaufort Printing House, while I was a throwing this concluding statement on paper, that the ole resources of that establishment was unable to make out what they meant. Upon which a certain gentleman in company, as I will not more particularly name, — but of whom it will be sufficient to

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MRS LIRRIPER'S LODGINGS

CHAPTER I

HOW MRS. LIRRIPER CARRIED ON THE BUSINESS

WHOEVER would begin to be worried with letting Lodgings that wasn't a lone woman with a living to get is a thing inconceivable to me, my dear; excuse the familiarity, but it comes natural to me in my own little room, when wishing to open my mind to those that I can trust, and I should be truly thankful if they were all mankind, but such is not so, for [illegible]

[illegible]

me, Miss Wozenham having her opinions and me having mine, though when it comes to systematic underbidding capable of being proved on oath in a court of justice and taking the form of "If Mrs. Lirriper names eighteen shillings a week, I name fifteen-and-six," it then comes to a settlement between yourself and your conscience, supposing for the sake of argument your name to be Wozenham, which I am well aware it is not or my opinion of you would be greatly lowered, and as to airy bedrooms and a night porter in constant attendance the less said the better, the bedrooms being stuffy and the porter stuff.

It is forty years ago since me and my poor Lirriper got married at St. Clement's Danes, where I now have a sitting in a very pleasant pew with genteel company and my own hassock, and being partial to evening service not too crowded. My poor Lirriper was a handsome figure of a man, with a beaming eye and a voice as mellow as a musical instrument made of honey and steel, but he had ever been a free liver being in the commercial travelling line and travelling what he called a lime-kiln road — "a dry road, Emma my dear," my poor Lirriper says to me, "where I have to lay the dust with one drink or another all day long and half the night, and it wears me Emma —" and this led to his running through a good deal and might have run through the turnpike too when that dreadful horse that never would stand still for a single instant set off, but for its being night and the gate shut, and consequently took his wheel, my poor Lirriper and the gig smashed to atoms and never spoke afterwards. He was a handsome figure of a man, and a man with a jovial heart and a sweet temper; but if they had come up then they never could have given you the mellowness of his voice, and indeed I consider photographs wanting in mellowness as a general rule and making you look like a new-ploughed field.

My poor Lirriper being behindhand with the world and being buried at Hatfield Church in Hertfordshire, not that it was his native place but that he had a liking for the Salisbury Arms where we went upon our wedding-day and passed as happy a fortnight as ever happy was, I went round to the creditors and I says · "Gentlemen I am acquainted wit
fact that I am not answerable for my late h
I wish to pay them for I am his lawful wi
is dear to me. I am going into the L

business and if I prosper every farthing that my late husband owed shall be paid for the sake of the love I bore him, by this right hand." It took a long time to do but it was done, and the silver cream-jug which is between ourselves and the bed and the mattress in my room up stairs (or it would have found legs so sure as ever the Furnished bill was up) being presented by the gentlemen engraved "To Mrs. Lirriper a mark of grateful respect for her honourable conduct" gave me a turn which was too much for my feelings, till Mr. Betley which at that time had the parlours and loved his joke says "Cheer up Mrs. Lirriper, you should feel as if it was only your christening and they were your godfathers and godmothers which did promise for you." And it brought me round, and I don't mind confessing to you my dear that I then put a sandwich and a drop of sherry in a little basket and went down to Hatfield churchyard outside the coach and kissed my hand and laid it with a kind of proud and swelling love on my husband's grave, though bless you it had taken me so long to clear his name that my wedding-ring was worn quite fine and smooth when I laid it on the green green waving grass.

I am an old woman now and my good looks are gone but that 's me my dear over the plate-warmer and considered like in the times when you used to pay two guineas on ivory and took your chance pretty much how you came out, which made you very careful how you left it about afterwards because people were turned so red and uncomfortable by mostly guessing it was somebody else quite different, and there was once a certain person that had put his money in a hop business that came in one morning to pay his rent and his respects being the second floor that would have taken it down from its hook and put it in his breast pocket — you understand my dear — for the L, he says of the original — only there was no mellowness in *his* voice and I would n't let him, but his opinion of it you may gather from his saying to it "Speak to me Emma!" which was far from a rational observation no doubt but still a tribute to its being a likeness, and I think myself it *was* like me when I was young and wore that sort of stays.

But it was about the Lodgings that I was intending to hold forth and certainly I ought to know something of the business having been in it so long, for it was early in the second year of my married life that I lost my poor Lirriper and I set up at

Islington directly afterwards and afterwards came here, being two houses and eight-and-thirty years and some losses and a deal of experience.

Girls are your first trial after fixtures and they try you even worse than what I call the Wandering Christians, though why *they* should roam the earth looking for bills and then coming in and viewing the apartments and stickling about terms and never at all wanting them or dreaming of taking them being already provided, is a mystery I should be thankful to have explained if by any miracle it could be. It 's wonderful they live so long and thrive so on it but I suppose the exercise makes it healthy, knocking so much and going from house to house and up and down stairs all day, and then their pretending to be so particular and punctual is a most astonishing thing, looking at their watches and saying "Could you give me the refusal of the rooms till twenty minutes past eleven the day after to-morrow in the forenoon, and supposing it to be considered essential by my friend from the country could there be a small iron bedstead put in the little room upon the stairs?" Why when I was new to it my dear I used to consider before I promised and to make my mind anxious with calculations and to get quite wearied out with disappointments, but now I says "Certainly by all means" well knowing it 's a Wandering Christian and I shall hear no more about it, indeed by this time I know most of the Wandering Christians by sight as well as they know me, it being the habit of each individual revolving round London in that capacity to come back about twice a year, and it 's very remarkable that it runs in families and the children grow up to it, but even were it otherwise I should no sooner hear of the friend from the country which is a certain sign than I should nod and say to myself You 're a Wandering Christian, though whether they are (as I *have* heard) persons of small property with a taste for regular employment and frequent change of scene I cannot undertake to tell you.

Girls as I was beginning to remark are one of your first and your lasting troubles, being like your teeth which begin with convulsions and never cease tormenting you from t cut them till they cut you, and then you don't with them which seems hard but we must all su artificial, and even where you get a will nine tim you 'll get a dirty face with it and naturally lo

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Mary Anne Perkinsop although I behaved handsomely to her and she behaved unhandsomely to me was worth her weight in gold as overawing lodgers without driving them away, for lodgers would be far more sparing of their bells with Mary Anne than I ever knew them to be with Maid or Mistress, which is a great triumph especially when accompanied with a cast in the eye and a bag of bones, but it was the steadiness of her way with them through her father's having failed in Pork. It was Mary Anne's looking so respectable in her person and being so strict in her spirits that conquered the tea-and-sugarest gentleman (for he weighed them both in a pair of scales every morning) that I have ever had to deal with and no lamb grew meeker, still it afterwards came round to me that Miss Wozenham happening to pass and seeing Mary Anne take in the milk of a milkman that made free in a rosy-faced way (I think no worse of him) with every girl in the street but was quite frozen up like the statue at Charing Cross by her, saw Mary Anne's value in the lodging business and went as high as one pound per quarter more, consequently Mary Anne with not a word betwixt us says "If *you* will provide yourself Mrs. Lirriper in a month from this day *I* have already done the same," which hurt me and I said so, and she then hurt me more by insinuating that her father having failed in Pork had laid her open to it.

My dear I do assure you it's a harassing thing to know what kind of girls to give the preference to, for if they are lively they get bell'd off their legs and if they are sluggish you suffer from it yourself in complaints and if they are sparkling-eyed they get made love to, and if they are smart in their persons they try on your Lodgers' bonnets and if they are musical I defy you to keep them away from bands and organs, and allowing for any difference you like in their heads their heads will be always out of window just the same. And then what the gentlemen like in girls the ladies don't, which is fruitful hot water for all parties, and then there's temper though such a temper as Caroline Maxey's I hope not often. A good-looking black-eyed girl was Caroline and a comely-made girl to your cost when she did break out and laid about her, as took place first and last through a new-married couple come to see London in the first floor and the lady very high and it *was* supposed not liking the good look of Caroline having none of her own to spare, but anyhow a

did try Caroline though that was no excuse. So one afternoon Caroline comes down into the kitchen flushed and flashing, and she says to me "Mrs. Lirriper that woman in the first has aggravated me past bearing," I says "Caroline keep your temper," Caroline says with a curdling laugh "Keep my temper? You 're right, Mrs. Lirriper, so I will. Capital D her!" bursts out Caroline (you might have struck me into the centre of the earth with a feather when she said it) "I 'll give her a touch of the temper that *I* keep!" Caroline downs with her hair my dear, screeches and rushes up stairs, I following as fast as my trembling legs could bear me, but before I got into the room the dinner-cloth and pink and white service all dragged off upon the floor with a crash and the new-married couple on their backs in the fire-grate, him with the shovel and tongs and a dish of cucumber across him and a mercy it was summer-time. "Caroline" I says "be calm," but she catches off my cap and tears it in her teeth as she passes me, then pounces on the new-married lady makes her a bundle of ribbons takes her by the two ears and knocks the back of her head upon the carpet Murder screaming all the time Policemen running down the street and Wozenham's windows (judge of my feelings when I came to know it) thrown up and Miss Wozenham calling out from the balcony with crocodile tears "It 's Mrs. Lirriper been overcharging somebody to madness — she 'll be murdered — I always thought so — Pleeseman save her!" My dear four of them and Caroline behind the chiffonier attacking with the poker and when disarmed prize-fighting with her double fists, and down and up and up and down and dreadful! But I couldn't bear to see the poor young creature roughly handled and her hair torn when they got the better of her, and I says "Gentlemen Policemen pray remember that her sex is the sex of your mothers and sisters and your sweethearts, and God bless them and you!" And there she was sitting down on the ground handcuffed, taking breath against the skirting-board and them cool with their coats in strips, and all she says was "Mrs. Lirriper I 'm sorry as ever I touched *you*, for you 're a kind motherly old thing," and it made me think that I had often wished I had been a mother indeed and how would my heart have felt if I had been the mother of that girl! Well you know it turned out at the police-office that she had done it before, and she had her clothes away and was sent to prison, and when she was to come

out I trotted off to the gate in the evening with just a morsel of jelly in that little basket of mine to give her a mite of strength to face the world again, and there I met with a very decent mother waiting for her son through bad company and a stubborn one he was with his half-boots not laced. So out came Caroline and I says "Caroline come along with me and sit down under the wall where it's retired and eat a little trifle that I have brought with me to do you good," and she throws her arms round my neck and says sobbing "Oh why were you never a mother when there are such mothers as there are?" she says, and in half a minute more she begins to laugh and says "Did I really tear your cap to shreds?" and when I told her "You certainly did so Caroline" she laughed again and said while she patted my face "Then why do you wear such queer old caps you dear old thing? If you had n't worn such queer old caps I don't think I should have done it even then." Fancy the girl! Nothing could get out of her what she was going to do except Oh she would do well enough, and we parted she being very thankful and kissing my hands, and I nevermore saw or heard of that girl, except that I shall always believe that a very genteel cap which was brought anonymous to me one Saturday night in an oil-skin basket by a most impertinent young sparrow of a monkey whistling with dirty shoes on the clean steps and playing the harp on the Airy railings with a hoop-stick came from Caroline.

What you lay yourself open to my dear in the way of being the object of uncharitable suspicions when you go into the Lodging business I have not the words to tell you, but never was I so dishonourable as to have two keys nor would I willingly think it even of Miss Wozenham lower down on the other side of the way sincerely hoping that it may not be, though doubtless at the same time money cannot come from nowhere and it is not reason to suppose that Bradshaws put it in for love be it blotty as it may. It *is* a hardship hurting to the feelings that Lodgers open their minds so wide to the idea that you are trying to get the better of them and shut their minds so close to the idea that they are trying to get the better o you, but as Major Jackman says to me "I know the ways o this circular world Mrs. Lirriper, and that's one of 'em al round it" and many is the little ruffle in my mind that major has smoothed, for he is a clever man who has seen a

[redacted]

Dear dear, thirteen years have passed though [illegible] to-day since I was sitting with my glasses on at [illegible] parlour window one evening in August the par[illegible] vacant reading yesterday's paper my eyes for [illegible] though still I am thankful to say a long [illegible] when I hear a gentleman come posting across [illegible] the street in a dreadful rage talking to himself [illegible] and [illegible] "By George!" says he [illegible] clutching his walking stick, "I'll go to Mrs. Lirriper[illegible] is Mrs. Lirriper's?" Then looking round [illegible] [illegible] right off his head as if I had [illegible] and [illegible] "Excuse the intrusion madam, but pray [illegible] you tell [illegible] what number in this street there [illegible] known and respected lady by the name of Lirriper?" A little flustered though I [illegible] say gratified I took off my glasses and curtseyed and said "Sir, Mrs. Lirriper [illegible] servant." "Astonishing!" says he. "A[illegible] Madam, [illegible] I [illegible]

[illegible]

of the major's occupying the parlours and from that hour to this the same and a most obliging Lodger and punctual in all respects except one irregular which I need not particularly specify, but made up for by his being a protection and at all times ready to fill in the papers of the Assessed Taxes and Juries and that, and once collared a young man with the drawing-room clock under his coat, and once on the parapets with his own hands and blankets put out the kitchen chimney and afterwards attending the summons made a most eloquent speech against the Parish before the magistrates and saved the engine, and ever quite the gentleman though passionate. And certainly Miss Wozenham's detaining the trunks and umbrella was not in a liberal spirit though it may have been according to her rights in law or an act *I* would myself have stooped to, the major being so much the gentleman that though he is far from tall he seems almost so when he has his shirt-frill out and his frock-coat on and his hat with the curly brims, and in what service he was I cannot tell you my dear whether Militia or Foreign, for I never heard him even name himself as major but always simple "Jemmy Jackman" and once soon after he came when I felt it my duty to let him know that Miss Wozenham had put it about that he was no major and I took the liberty of adding "which you are sir" his words were "Madam at any rate I am not a Minor, and sufficient for the day is the evil thereof" which cannot be denied to be the sacred truth, nor yet his military ways of having his boots with only the dirt brushed off taken to him in the front parlour every morning on a clean plate and varnishing them himself with a little sponge and a saucer and a whistle in a whisper so sure as ever his breakfast is ended, and so neat his ways that it never soils his linen which is scrupulous though more in quality than in quantity, neither that nor his mustachios which to the best of my belief are done at the same time and which are as black and shining as his boots, his head of hair being a lovely white.

It was the third year nearly up of the major's being in the parlours that early one morning in the month of February when Parliament was coming on and you may therefore suppose a number of impostors were about ready to take hold of
they could get, a gentleman and lady from the com
to view the Second, and I well remember that I h
ing out of window and had watched them and t

driving down the street together looking for bills [illegible] quite take to the face of the gentleman though he was good looking too but the lady was a very pretty young thing [illegible] delicate, and it seemed too rough for her to be out at all [illegible] she had only come from the Adelphi Hotel which [illegible] have been much above a quarter of a mile if the weather [illegible] been less severe. Now it did so happen my dear that I [illegible] been forced to put five shillings weekly additional [illegible] in consequence of a loss from running away full-dress [illegible] going out to a dinner-party, which was very artful [illegible] made me rather suspicious taking it along with Parliament [illegible] when the gentleman proposed three months certain and [illegible] money in advance and leave then reserved to renew [illegible] same terms for six months more, I says I was not quite [illegible] but that I might have engaged myself to another party [illegible] would step down-stairs and look into it if they would [illegible] seat. They took a seat and I went down to the [illegible] major's door that I had already begun [illegible] great [illegible] and I knew [illegible]

[illegible]

The major rubbed his nose again and stirred round and round in its little saucer with his piece o[illegible] took to his whistling in a whisper for a few mom[illegible] he says, "You would call it a Good Let, madam?"

"Oh certainly a Good Let sir."

"Say they renew for the additional six months. Would it put you about very much madam if — if the worst [illegible]s to come to the worst?" said the major.

"Well I hardly know," I says to the major. "It depends upon circumstances. Would *you* object sir for instance?"

"I?" says the major. "Object? Jemmy Jackman? Mrs. Lirriper close with the proposal."

So I went up stairs and accepted, and they came in next day which was Saturday, and the major was so good as to draw up a Memorandum of an agreement in a beautiful round hand and expressions that sounded to me equally legal and military, and Mr. Edson signed it on the Monday morning and the major called upon Mr. Edson on the Tuesday, and Mr. Edson called upon the major on the Wednesday and the Second and the parlours were as friendly as could be wished.

The three months paid for had run out and we had got without any fresh overtures as to payment into May my dear, when there came an obligation upon Mr. Edson to go a business expedition right across the Isle of Man, which fell quite unexpected upon that pretty little thing and is not a place that according to my views is particularly in the way to anywhere at any time but that may be a matter of opinion. So short a notice was it that he was to go next day, and dreadfully she cried poor pretty and I am sure I cried too when I saw her on the cold pavement in the sharp east wind — it being a very backward spring that year — taking a last leave of him with her pretty bright hair blowing this way and that, and her arms clinging round his neck and him saying "There there there. Now let me go Peggy." And by that time it was plain that what the major had been so accommodating as to say he would not object to happening in the house, would happen in it, and I told her as much when he was gone while I comforted her with my arm up the staircase, for I says "You will soon have others to keep up for my pretty and you must think of that."

His letter never came when it ought to have come and what she went through morning after morning when the postman

brought none for her the very postman himself [illegible] when she ran down to the door, and yet we cannot [illegible] its being calculated to blunt the feelings to have [illegible] of other people's letters and none of the [illegible] oftener in the [illegible] and mizzle than [illegible] more resembling Little Britain than Great [illegible] morning when she was too poorly to come [illegible] he says to me with a pleased look in his face [illegible] next to love the man in his uniform coat [illegible] ping wet "I have taken you first in the street [illegible] Mrs. Lirriper, for here's the one for Mrs. [illegible]." I [illegible] to her bedroom with it as fast as ever I could [illegible] up in bed when she saw it and kissed it and [illegible] then a blank state came upon her "It's very [illegible]" says lifting her large eyes to my face. "O Mrs. [illegible] very short!" I says "My dear Mrs. [illegible] because your husband hadn't time to write [illegible] time." "No doubt, no doubt," [illegible]

[illegible]

off his table the very hat off his head, and at the s[illegible] time so furious in foreign languages that they would stand [illegible]un their handles half turned fixed like the Sleeping Ugly — f[illegible] I cannot say Beauty.

Ever to see the postman come near the house now gave me such a fear that it was a reprieve when he went by but in about another ten days or a fortnight he says again "Here 's one for Mrs. Edson. — Is she pretty well ?" "She is pretty well postman, but not well enough to rise so early as she used" which was so far gospel truth.

I carried the letter in to the major at his breakfast and I says tottering "Major I have not the courage to take it up to her."

"It 's an ill-looking villain of a letter," says the major.

"I have not the courage Major" I says again in a tremble "to take it up to her."

After seeming lost in consideration for some moments the major says raising his head as if something new and useful had occurred to his mind "Mrs. Lirriper, I shall never forgive myself that I, Jemmy Jackman, did n't go straight up stairs that morning when my boot-sponge was in my hand — and force it down his throat — and choke him dead with it."

"Major" I says a little hasty "you did n't do it which is a blessing, for it would have done no good and I think your sponge was better employed on your own honourable boots."

So we got to be rational, and planned that I should tap at her bedroom door and lay the letter on the mat outside and wait on the upper landing for what might happen, and never was gunpowder cannon-balls or shells or rockets more dreaded than that dreadful letter was by me as I took it to the second floor.

A terrible loud scream sounded through the house the minute after she had opened it, and I found her on the floor lying as if her life was gone. My dear I never looked at the face of the letter which was lying open by her, for there was no occasion.

Everything I needed to bring her round the major brought up with his own hands, besides running out to the chemist's for what was not in the house and likewise having the fiercest of all his many skirmishes with a musical instrument representing a ballroom I do not know in what particular country and company waltzing in and out at folding doors with rolling eyes. When after a long time I saw her coming to, I slipped on the landing till I heard her cry, and then I went in and says

cheerily "Mrs. Edson you're not well my dear and [illegible] be wondered at," as if I had not been in before. Whether believed or disbelieved I cannot say, and [illegible] nothing if I could, but I stayed by her [illegible] God ever bless me! and says she will try to [illegible] is bad. "Major," I whispers, looking in at the [illegible] beg and pray of you don't go out."

The major whispers, "Madam, trust me I w[illegible] thing. H[illegible] she?"

I says "M[illegible] the good Lord [illegible] burns and [illegible] in her poor mind. I left her sitting at window. I [illegible] going to sit at mine."

It came on afternoon and it came on evening. N[illegible] delightful street to lodge in [illegible] provided [illegible] down [illegible] of a summer evening wh[illegible] the [illegible] paper [illegible] and stray children play in it and a [illegible] gritty [illegible] settles on it [illegible] pr[illegible]

[illegible]

the water. She must be going at hazard I knew, st[illegible]pt the by-streets quite correctly as long as they would [illegible]ner, and then turned up into the Strand. But at eve[illegible]er I could see her head turned one way, and that way [illegible]lways the river way.

It may have been only the darkness and quiet of the A[illegible]lphi that caused her to strike into it but she struck into it much as readily as if she had set out to go there, which perhaps was the case. She went straight down to the Terrace and along it and looked over the iron rail, and I often woke afterwards in my own bed with the horror of seeing her doing it. The desertion of the wharf below and the flowing of the high water there seemed to settle her purpose. She looked about as if to make out the way down, and she struck out the right way or the wrong way — I don't know which, for I don't know the place before or since — and I followed her the way she went.

It was noticeable that all this time she never once looked back. But there was now a great change in the manner of her going, and instead of going at a steady quick walk with her arms folded before her, — among the dark dismal arches she went in a wild way with her arms opened wide, as if they were wings and she was flying to her death.

We were on the wharf and she stopped. I stopped. I saw her hands at her bonnet strings, and I rushed between her and the brink and took her round the waist with both my arms. She might have drowned me, I felt then, but she could never have got quit of me.

Down to that moment my mind had been all in a maze and not half an idea had I had in it what I should say to her, but the instant I touched her it came to me like magic and I had my natural voice and my senses and even almost my breath.

"Mrs. Edson!" I says "My dear! Take care. How ever did you lose your way and stumble on a dangerous place like this? Why you must have come here by the most perplexing streets in all London. No wonder you are lost, I am sure. And this place too! Why I thought nobody ever got here, except me to order my coals and the major in the parlours to smoke his cigar!" — for I saw that blessed man close by, pretending to it.

"Hah — Hah — Hum!" coughs the major.

"And good gracious me" I says, "why here he is!"

"Halloa! who goes there?" says the major in a military manner.

"Well!" I says, "if this don't beat everything! Don't you know us Major Jackman?"

"Halloa!" says the major. "Who calls on Jemmy Jackman?" (and more out of breath he was, and did it less like a man than I should have expected.)

"Why here's Mrs. Edson Major," I says, "strolling out to cool her poor head which has been very bad, has missed her way and got lost, and Goodness knows where she might have got to but for me coming here to drop an order into the merchant's letter box and you coming here to smoke your cigar!—And you really are not well enough my dear," I says, "to be half so far from home without me.—And your arm will be very acceptable I am sure Major," I says to him, "and I know she may lean upon it as heavy as she likes." And now we had both got her—thanks be Above!—one on each side.

[illegible]

"Ah! Then he has got it" I says in a careless way. "It's of no great consequence. A receipt's a receipt."

From that time she always had hold of my hand when I could spare it which was generally only when I read to her, for of course she and me had our bits of needlework to plod at and neither of us was very handy at those little things, though I am still rather proud of my share in them too considering. And though she took to all I read to her, I used to fancy that next to what was taught upon the Mount she took most of all to His gentle compassion for us poor women and to His young life and to how His mother was proud of Him and treasured His sayings in her heart. She had a grateful look in her eyes that never never never will be out of mine until they are closed in my last sleep, and when I chanced to look at her without thinking of it I would always meet that look, and she would often offer me her trembling lip to kiss, much more like a little affectionate half broken-hearted child than ever I can imagine any grown person.

One time the trembling of this poor lip was so strong and her tears ran down so fast that I thought she was going to tell me all her woe, so I takes her two hands in mine and I says: —

"No my dear not now, you had best not try to do it now. Wait for better times when you have got over this and are strong, and then you shall tell me whatever you will. Shall it be agreed?"

With our hands still joined she nodded her head many times, and she lifted my hands and put them to her lips and to her bosom.

"Only one word now my dear" I says. "Is there any one?"

She looked inquiringly "Any one?"

"That I can go to?"

She shook her head.

"No one that I can bring?"

She shook her head.

"No one is wanted by *me* my dear. Now that may be considered past and gone."

Not much more than a week afterwards — for this was far on in the time of our being so together — I was bending over at her bedside with my ear down to her lips, by turns listening for her breath and looking for a sign of life in her face. At

last it came in a solemn way — not in a flash but like a kind of pale faint light brought very slow to the face.

She said something to me that had no sound in it, but I saw she asked me: —

"Is this death?"

And I says: —

"Poor dear, poor dear, I think it is."

Knowing somehow that she wanted me to move her weak right hand, I took it and laid it on her breast and then folded her other hand upon it, and she prayed a good good prayer and I joined in it poor me though there were no words spoke. Then I brought the baby in its wrappers from where it lay, and I says: —

"My dear this is sent to a childless old woman. This is for me to take care of."

The trembling lip was put up towards my face for the last time, and I dearly kissed it.

"Yes my dear" I says. "Please God! Me and the major."

I don't know how to tell it right, but I saw her soul brighten and leap up, and get free and fly away in the grateful look.

. . . .

So this is the why and wherefore of its coming to pass my dear that we called him Jemmy, being after the major his own godfather with Lirriper for a surname being after myself and never was a dear child such a brightening thing in a Lodgings or such a playmate to his grandmother as Jemmy to this house and me, and always good and minding what he was told (upon the whole) and soothing for the temper and making everything pleasanter except when he grew old enough to drop his cap down Wozenham's Airy and they wouldn't hand it up to him, and being worked into a state I put on my best bonnet and gloves and parasol with the child in my hand and I says "Miss Wozenham I little thought ever to have entered your house but unless my grandson's cap is instantly restored the laws of this country regulating the property of the Subject shall at length decide betwixt yourself and me, cost what it may." With a sneer upon her face which did strike me I must say as being expressive of two keys but it may have been a mistake and if there is any doubt let Miss Wozenham have the full benefit of it as is but right, she rang the bell and she says

"Jane, is there a street child's old cap down our Airy?" I says "Miss Wozenham before your housemaid answers that question you must allow me to inform you to your face that my grandson is *not* a street child and is *not* in the habit of wearing old caps. In fact" I says "Miss Wozenham I am far from sure that my grandson's cap may not be newer than your own" which was perfectly savage in me, her lace being the commonest machine-make washed and torn besides, but I had been put into a state to begin with fomented by impertineuce. Miss Wozenham says red in the face "Jane you heard my question, is there any child's cap down our Airy?" "Yes ma'am" says Jane "I think I did see some such rubbish a lying there." "Then" says Miss Wozenham "let these visitors out, and then throw up that worthless article out of my premises." But here the child who had been staring at Miss Wozenham with all his eyes and more frowns down his little eyebrows purses up his little mouth puts his chubby legs far apart turns his little dimpled fists round and round slowly over one another like a little coffee-mill, and says to her "Oo impdent to mi Gran, me tut oor hi!" "Oh!" says Miss Wozenham looking down scornfully at the Mite "this is not a street child is it not? Really!" I bursts out laughing and I says "Miss Wozenham if this ain't a pretty sight to you I don't envy your feelings and I wish you good day. Jemmy come along with Gran." And I was still in the best of humours though his cap came flying up into the street as if it had been just turned on out of the water-plug, and I went home laughing all the way, all owing to that dear boy.

The miles and miles that me and the major have travelled with Jemmy in the dusk between the lights are not to be calculated, Jemmy driving on the coach-box which is the major's brass-bound writing-desk on the table, me inside in the easy-chair and the major guard up behind with a brown-paper horn doing it really wonderful. I do assure you my dear that sometimes when I have taken a few winks in my place inside the coach and have come half awake by the flashing light of the fire and have heard that precious pet driving and the major blowing up behind to have the change of horses ready when we got to the Inn, I have half believed we were on the old North Road that my poor Lirriper knew so well. Then to see that child and the major both wrapped up getting down ^-

their feet and going stamping about and having glasses of ale out of the paper match-boxes on the chimney-piece is to see the major enjoying it fully as much as the child I am very sure, and it 's equal to any play when Coachee opens the coach door to look in at me inside and say, "Wery 'past that 'tage.— 'Prightened old lady ?"

But what my inexpressible feelings were when we lost that child can only be compared to the major's which were not a shade better, through his straying out at five years old and eleven o'clock in the forenoon and never heard of by word or sign or deed till half-past nine at night, when the major had gone to the editor of the "Times" newspaper to put in an advertisement which came out next day four-and-twenty hours after he was found, and which I mean always carefully to keep in my lavender drawer as the first printed account of him. The more the day got on, the more I got distracted and the major too and both of us made worse by the composed ways of the police though very civil and obliging and what I must call their obstinacy in not entertaining the idea that he was stolen. "We mostly find mum" says the sergeant who came round to comfort me, which he did n't at all and he had been one of the private constables in Caroline's time to which he referred in his opening words when he said, "Don't give way to uneasiness in your mind mum, it 'll all come as right as my nose did when I got the same barked by that young woman in your second floor" — says this sergeant, "we mostly find mum as people ain't over-anxious to have what I may call second-hand children. *You* 'll get him back mum." "Oh but my dear good sir" I says clasping my hands and wringing them and clasping them again "he is such an uncommon child!" "Yes mum" says the sergeant, "we mostly find that too mum. The question is what his clothes were worth." "His clothes" I says, "were not worth much sir for he had only got his playing-dress on, but the dear child — " "All right mum" says the sergeant. "*You* 'll get him back mum. And even if he 'd had his best clothes on, it would n't come to worse than his being found wrapped up in a cabbage-leaf, a shivering in a lane." His words pierced my heart like daggers and daggers, and me and the major ran in and out like wild things all day long till the major returning from his interview with the editor of the "Times" at night rushes into my little room hysterical and

squeezes my hand and wipes his eyes and says, "Joy joy — officer in plain clothes came up on the steps as I was letting myself in — compose your feelings — Jemmy 's found." Consequently I fainted away and when I came to, embraced the legs of the officer in plain clothes who seemed to be taking a kind of a quiet inventory in his mind of the property in my little room with brown whiskers, and I says, "Blessings on you sir where is the Darling?" and he says, "In Kennington station-house." I was dropping at his feet Stone at the image of that Innocence in cells with murderers when he adds, "He followed the Monkey." I says deeming it slang language "O sir explain for a loving grandmother what Monkey!" He says "Him in the spangled cap with the strap under the chin, as won't keep on — him as sweeps the crossings on a round table and don't want to draw his sabre more than he can help." Then I understood it all and most thankfully thanked him, and me and the major and him drove over to Kennington and there we found our boy lying quite comfortable before a blazing fire having sweetly played himself to sleep upon a small accordion nothing like so big as a flat-iron which they had been so kind as to lend him for the purpose and which it appeared had been stopped upon a very young person.

My dear the system upon which the major commenced and as I may say perfected Jemmy's learning when he was so small that if the dear was on the other side of the table you had to look under it instead of over it to see him with his mother's own bright hair in beautiful curls, is a thing that ought to be known to the Throne and Lords and Commons and then might obtain some promotion for the major which he well deserves and would be none the worse for (speaking between friends) L. S. D.-ically. When the major first undertook his learning he says to me: —

"I 'm going madam" he says "to make our child a Calculating Boy."

"Major" I says, "you terrify me and may do the pet a permanent injury you would never forgive yourself."

"Madam," says the major, "next to my regret that when I had my boot-sponge in my hand, I did n't choke that scoundrel with it — on the spot — "

"There! For Gracious' sake," I interrupts, "let his conscience find him without sponges."

[redacted]

"— I say next to that regret, madam," says the major "would be the regret with which my breast," which he tapped, "would be surcharged if this fine mind was not early cultivated. But mark me madam," says the major holding up his forefinger "cultivated on a principle that will make it a delight."

"Major" I says "I will be candid with you and tell you openly that if ever I find the dear child fall off in his appetite I shall know it is his calculations and shall put a stop to them at two minutes' notice. Or if I find them mounting to his head," I says, "or striking anyways cold to his stomach or leading to anything approaching flabbiness in his legs, the result will be the same, but Major you are a clever man and have seen much and you love the child and are his own godfather, and if you feel a confidence in trying try."

"Spoken madam" says the major "like Emma Lirriper. All I have to ask, madam, is, that you will leave my godson and myself to make a week or two's preparations for surprising you, and that you will give me leave to have up and down any small articles not actually in use that I may require from the kitchen."

"From the kitchen major?" I says half feeling as if he had a mind to cook the child.

"From the kitchen" says the major, and smiles and swells and at the same time looks taller.

So I passed my word and the major and the dear boy were shut up together for half an hour at a time through a certain while, and never could I hear anything going on betwixt them but talking and laughing and Jemmy clapping his hands and screaming out numbers, so I says to myself "It has not harmed him yet" nor could I on examining the dear find any signs of it anywhere about him which was likewise a great relief. At last one day Jemmy brings me a card in joke in the major's neat writing "The Messrs. Jemmy Jackman" for we had given him the major's other name too "request the honour of Mrs. Lirriper's company at the Jackman Institution in the front parlour this evening at five, military time, to witness a few slight feats of elementary arithmetic." And if you'll believe me there in the front parlour at five punctual to the moment was the major behind the Pembroke table with both leaves up and a lot of things from the kitchen tidily set out on old newspapers spread atop of it, and there was the Mite stood up

on a chair with his rosy cheeks flushing and his eyes sparkling clusters of diamonds.

"Now Gran" says he "oo tit down and don't oo touch ler poople" — for he saw with every one of those diamonds of his that I was going to give him a squeeze.

"Very well sir" I says "I am obedient in this good company I am sure." And I sits down in the easy-chair that was put for me, shaking my sides.

But picture my admiration when the major going on almost as quick as if he was conjuring sets out all the articles he names, and says, "Three saucepans, an Italian iron, a hand-bell, a toasting-fork, a nutmeg-grater, four potlids, a spice box, two egg-cups, and a chopping-board — how many?" and when that Mite instantly cries "Tifteen, tut down tive and carry ler 'toppin-board" and then claps his hands draws up his legs and dances on his chair.

My dear with the same astonishing ease and correctness him and the major added up the tables chairs and sofy, the picters fenders and fire-irons their own selves me and the cat and the eyes in Miss Wozenham's head, and whenever the sum was done Young Roses and Diamonds claps his hands and draws up his legs and dances on his chair.

The pride of the major! ("*Here*'s a mind ma'am!" he says to me behind his hand.)

Then he says aloud, "We now come to the next elementary rule, — which is called — "

"Umtraction!" cries Jemmy.

"Right," says the major. "We have here a toasting-fork, a potato in its natural state, two potlids, one egg-cup, a wooden spoon, and two skewers, from which it is necessary for commercial purposes to subtract a sprat-gridiron, a small pickle jar, two lemons, one pepper-caster, a blackbeetle trap, and a knob of the dresser drawer — what remains?"

"Toatin-fork!" cries Jemmy.

"In numbers how many?" says the major.

"One!" cries Jemmy.

("*Here*'s a boy, ma'am!" says the major to me behind his hand.)

Then the major goes on: —

"We now approach the next elementary rule, — which is entitled — "

"Tickleication" cries Jemmy.

"Correct" says the major.

But my dear to relate to you in detail the way in which they multiplied fourteen sticks of fire-wood by two bits of ginger and a larding-needle, or divided pretty well everything else there was on the table by the heater of the Italian iron and a chamber candlestick, and got a lemon over, would make my head spin round and round and round as it did at the time. So I says "If you'll excuse my addressing the chair Professor Jackman I think the period of the lecture has now arrived when it becomes necessary that I should take a good hug of this young scholar." Upon which Jemmy calls out from his station on the chair, "Gran oo open our arms and me'll make a 'pring into 'em." So I opened my arms to him as I had opened my sorrowful heart when his poor young mother lay a dying, and he had his jump and we had a good long hug together and the major prouder than any peacock says to me behind his hand, "You need not let him know it madam" (which I certainly need not for the major was quite audible) "but he is a boy!"

In this way Jemmy grew and grew and went to day-school and continued under the major too, and in summer we were as happy as the days were long, and in winter we were as happy as the days were short and there seemed to rest a Blessing on the Lodgings for they as good as Let themselves and would have done it if there had been twice the accommodation, when sore and hard against my will I one day says to the major—

"Major you know what I am going to break to you. Our boy must go to boarding-school."

It was a sad sight to see the major's countenance drop, and I pitied the good soul with all my heart.

"Yes Major" I says "though he is as popular with the Lodgers as you are yourself and though he is to you and me what only you and me know, still it is in the course of things and Life is made of partings and we must part with our Pet."

Bold as I spoke, I saw two majors and half a dozen fireplaces, and when the poor major put one of his neat legs in a varnished boot upon the fender and his elbow on his knee and his head upon his hand and rocked himself a little to and fro, I was dreadfully cut up.

"But," says I clearing my throat "you have so well prepared

him Major — he has had such a Tutor in you — tl[illegible]ne will have none of the first drudgery to go through. And he is so clever besides that he'll soon make his way to the front rank."

"He is a boy" says the major — having sniffed — "that has not his like on the face of the earth."

"True as you say Major, and it is not for us merely for our own sakes to do anything to keep him back from being a credit and an ornament wherever he goes and perhaps even rising to be a great man, is it Major? He will have all my little savings when my work is done (being all the world to me) and we must try to make him a wise man and a good man, must n't we Major?"

"Madam" says the major rising "Jemmy Jackman is becoming an older file than I was aware of, and you put him to shame. You are thoroughly right madam. You are simply and undeniably right. — And if you'll excuse me, I'll take a walk."

So the major being gone out and Jemmy being at home, I got the child into my little room here and I stood him by my chair and I took his mother's own curls in my hand and I spoke to him loving and serious. And when I had reminded the darling how that he was now in his tenth year and when I had said to him about his getting on in life pretty much what I had said to the major I broke to him how that we must have this same parting, and there I was forced to stop for there I saw of a sudden the well-remembered lip with its tremble, and it so brought back that time! But with the spirit that was in him he controlled it soon and he says gravely nodding through his tears, "I understand Gran — I know it *must* be, Gran — go on Gran, don't be afraid of *me*." And when I had said all that ever I could think of, he turned his bright steady face to mine and he says just a little broken here and there "You shall see Gran that I can be a man and that I can do anything that is grateful and loving to you — and if I don't grow up to be what you would like to have me — I hope it will be — because I shall die." And with that he sat down by me and I went on to tell him of the school of which I had excellent recommendations and where it was and how many scholars and what games they played as I had heard and what length of holidays, to all of which he listened bright and clear. And so it came that at

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

"As a rule (with its exceptions like all rules) my dear madam" says the major, "they have honoured me with their acquaintance, and not unfrequently with their confidence."

Watching the major as he drooped his white head and stroked his black mustachios and moped again, a thought which I think must have been going about looking for an owner somewhere dropped into my old noddle if you will excuse the expression.

"The walls of my Lodgings" I says in a casual way — for my dear it is of no use going straight at a man who mopes — "might have something to tell if they could tell it."

The major neither moved nor said anything but I saw he was attending with his shoulders my dear — attending with his shoulders to what I said. In fact I saw that his shoulders were struck by it.

"The dear boy was always fond of story-books" I went on, like as if I was talking to myself. "I am sure this house — his own home — might write a story or two for his reading one day or another."

The major's shoulders gave a dip and a curve and his head came up in his shirt-collar. The major's head came up in his shirt-collar as I had n't seen it come up since Jemmy went to school.

"It is unquestionable that in intervals of cribbage and a friendly rubber, my dear madam," says the major, "and also over what used to be called in my young times — in the salad days of Jemmy Jackman — the social glass, I have exchanged many a reminiscence with your Lodgers."

My remark was — I confess I made it with the deepest and artfullest of intentions — "I wish our dear boy had heard them!"

"Are you serious madam?" asks the major starting and turning full round.

"Why not Major?"

"Madam" says the major, turning up one of his cuffs, "they shall be written for him."

"Ah! Now you speak" I says giving my hands a pleased clap. "Now you are in a way out of moping Major!"

"Between this and my holidays — I mean the dear boy's" says the major turning up his other cuff, "a good deal may be done towards it."

"Major you are a clever man and you have seen much and not a doubt of it."

"I 'll begin," says the major looking as tall as ever he did, "to-morrow."

My dear the major was another man in three days and he was himself again in a week and he wrote and wrote and wrote with his pen scratching like rats behind the wainscot, and whether he had many grounds to go upon or whether he did at all romance I cannot tell you, but what he has written is in the left-hand glass closet of the little bookcase close behind you.[1]

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE PARLOURS ADDED A FEW WORDS

I HAVE the honour of presenting myself by the name of Jackman. I esteem it a proud privilege to go down to posterity through the instrumentality of the most remarkable boy that ever lived, — by the name of JEMMY JACKMAN LIRRIPER, — and of my most worthy and most highly respected friend, Mrs. Emma Lirriper, of Eighty-one Norfolk Street, Strand, in the county of Middlesex, in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

It is not for me to express the rapture with which we received that dear and eminently remarkable boy, on the occurrence of his first Christmas holidays. Suffice it to observe that when he came flying into the house with two splendid prizes (Arithmetic and Exemplary Conduct), Mrs. Lirriper and myself embraced with emotion, and instantly took him to the Play, where we were all three admirably entertained.

Nor is it to render homage to the virtues of the best of her good and honoured sex — whom, in deference to her unassuming worth, I will only here designate by the initials E. L. — that I add this record to the bundle of papers with which each, in a most distinguished degree, remarkable boy has expressed himself delighted, before reconsigning the same to the left-hand glass closet of Mrs. Lirriper's little bookcase.

Neither is it to obtrude the name of the old original superannuated obscure Jemmy Jackman, once (to his degradation)

[1] Chapters ii.–vi. were not by Mr. Dickens.

of Wozenham's, long (to his elevation) of Lirriper's. If I could be consciously guilty of that piece of bad taste, it would indeed be a work of supererogation, now that the name is borne by JEMMY JACKMAN LIRRIPER.

No, I take up my humble pen to register a little record of our strikingly remarkable boy, which my poor capacity regards as presenting a pleasant little picture of the dear boy's mind. The picture may be interesting to himself when he is a man.

Our first reunited Christmas Day was the most delightful one we have ever passed together. Jemmy was never silent for five minutes, except in church-time. He talked as we sat by the fire, he talked when we were out walking, he talked as we sat by the fire again, he talked incessantly at dinner, though he made a dinner almost as remarkable as himself. It was the spring of happiness in his fresh young heart flowing and flowing, and it fertilised (if I may be allowed so bold a figure) my much-esteemed friend, and J. J. the present writer.

There were only we three. We dined in my esteemed friend's little room, and our entertainment was perfect. But everything in the establishment is, in neatness, order, and comfort, always perfect. After dinner our boy slipped away to his old stool at my esteemed friend's knee, and there, with his hot chestnuts and his glass of brown sherry (really, a most excellent wine!) on a chair for a table, his face outshone the apples in the dish.

We talked of these jottings of mine, which Jemmy had read through and through by that time; and so it came about that my esteemed friend remarked, as she sat smoothing Jemmy's curls: —

"And as you belong to the house too, Jemmy, — and so much more than the Lodgers, having been born in it, — why, your story ought to be added to the rest, I think, one of these days."

Jemmy's eyes sparkled at this, and he said, "So *I* think, Gran."

Then he sat looking at the fire, and then he began to laugh in a sort of confidence with the fire, and then he said, folding his arms across my esteemed friend's lap, and raising his bright face to hers: "Would you like to hear a boy's story, Gran?"

"Of all things," replied my esteemed friend.

"Would you, godfather?"

"Of all things," I too replied.

"Well, then," said Jemmy, "I'll tell you one."

Here our indisputably remarkable boy gave himself a hug, and laughed again, musically, at the idea of his coming out in that new line. Then he once more took the fire into the same sort of confidence as before, and began:—

"Once upon a time, When pigs drank wine, And monkeys chewed tobaccer, 'T was neither in your time nor mine, But that's no macker —"

"Bless the child!" cried my esteemed friend, "what's amiss with his brain?"

"It's poetry, Gran," returned Jemmy, shouting with laughter. "We always begin stories that way at school."

"Gave me quite a turn, Major," said my esteemed friend, fanning herself with a plate. "Thought he was light-headed!"

"In those remarkable times, Gran and godfather, there was once a boy — not me, you know."

"No, no," says my respected friend, "not you. Not him. Major, you understand?"

"No, no," says I.

"And he went to school in Rutlandshire —"

"Why not Lincolnshire?" says my respected friend.

"Why not, you dear old Gran? Because *I* go to school in Lincolnshire, don't I?"

"Ah, to be sure!" says my respected friend. "And it's not Jemmy, you understand, Major?"

"No, no," says I.

"Well!" our boy proceeded, hugging himself comfortably, and laughing merrily (again in confidence with the fire), before he again looked up in Mrs. Lirriper's face, "and so he was tremendously in love with his schoolmaster's daughter, and she was the most beautiful creature that ever was seen, and she had brown eyes, and she had brown hair all curling beautifully, and she had a delicious voice, and she was delicious altogether, and her name was Seraphina."

"What's the name of *your* schoolmaster's daughter, Jemmy?" asks my respected friend.

"Polly!" replied Jemmy, pointing his forefinger at her. "There now! Caught you! Ha, ha, ha!"

When he and my respected friend had had a laugh, and a

hug together, our admittedly remarkable boy resu[illegible]h a great relish: —

"Well! And so he loved her. And so he th[illegible]t about her, and dreamed about her, and made her presents [illegible] oranges and nuts, and would have made her presents of pearls and diamonds if he could have afforded it out of his pocket money, but he could n't. And so her father — Oh, he WAS a Tartar! Keeping the boys up to the mark, holding examinations once a month, lecturing upon all sorts of subjects at all sorts of times, and knowing everything in the world out of book. And so this boy — "

"Had he any name?" asks my respected friend.

"No, he had n't, Gran. Ha, ha! There now! Caught you again!"

After this they had another laugh and another hug, and then our boy went on.

"Well! And so this boy, he had a friend about as old as himself at the same school, and his name (for He *had* a name, as it happened) was — let me remember — was Bobbo."

"Not Bob?" says my respected friend.

"Of course not," says Jemmy. "What made you think it was, Gran? Well! And so this friend was the cleverest and bravest and best-looking and most generous of all the friends that ever were, and so he was in love with Seraphina's sister, and so Seraphina's sister was in love with him, and so they all grew up."

"Bless us!" says my respected friend. "They were very sudden about it."

"So they all grew up," our boy repeated, laughing heartily, "and Bobbo and this boy went away together on horseback to seek their fortunes, and they partly got their horses by favour, and partly in a bargain; that is to say, they had saved up between them seven-and-fourpence, and the two horses, being Arabs, were worth more, only the man said he would take that, to favour them. Well! And so they made their fortunes and came prancing back to the school, with their pockets full of gold, enough to last for ever. And so they rang at the parents' and visitors' bell (not the backgate), and when the bell was answered they proclaimed, 'The same as if it was scarlet fever! Every boy goes home for an indefinite period!' And then there was great hurrahing, and then they kissed Seraphina and

her sister, — each his own love, and not the other's on any account, — and then they ordered the Tartar into instant confinement."

"Poor man!" said my respected friend.

"Into instant confinement, Gran," repeated Jemmy, trying to look severe and roaring with laughter; "and he was to have nothing to eat but the boys' dinners, and was to drink half a cask of their beer every day. And so then the preparations were made for the two weddings, and there were hampers and potted things, and sweet things and nuts, and postage stamps, and all manner of things. And so they were so jolly, that they let the Tartar out, and he was jolly too."

"I am glad they let him out," says my respected friend, "because he had only done his duty."

"Oh, but had n't he overdone it, though!" cried Jemmy. "Well! And so then this boy mounted his horse, with his bride in his arms, and cantered away, and cantered on and on till he came to a certain place where he had a certain Gran and a certain godfather, — not you two, you know."

"No, no," we both said.

"And there he was received with great rejoicings, and he filled the cupboard and the bookcase with gold, and he showered it out on his Gran and his godfather because they were the two kindest and dearest people that ever lived in this world. And so, while they were sitting up to their knees in gold, a knocking was heard at the street door, and who should it be but Bobbo, also on horseback with his bride in his arms, and what had he come to say but that he would take (at double rent) all the Lodgings forever, that were not wanted by this boy and this Gran and this godfather, and that they would all live together, and all be happy! And so they were, and so it never ended!"

"And was there no quarrelling?" asked my respected friend, as Jemmy sat upon her lap and hugged her.

"No! Nobody ever quarrelled."

"And did the money never melt away?"

"No! Nobody could ever spend it all."

"And did none of them ever grow older?"

"No! Nobody ever grew older after that."

"And did none of them ever die?"

"Oh, no, no, no, Gran!" exclaimed our dear boy, laying his

cheek upon her breast, and drawing her closer to h "Nobody ever died."

"Ah, Major, Major!" says my respected frie smiling benignly upon me, "this beats our stories. Let u end with the Boy's story, Major, for the Boy's story is the best that is ever told!"

In submission to which request on the part of the best of women, I have here noted it down as faithfully as my best abilities, coupled with my best intentions, would admit, subscribing it with my name,

J. Jackman.

The Parlours.
Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings.

MRS. LIRRIPER'S LEGACY

CHAPTER I

MRS. LIRRIPER RELATES HOW SHE WENT ON, AND WENT OVER

Ah! It's pleasant to drop into my own easy-chair my dear though a little palpitating what with trotting up stairs and what with trotting down, and why kitchen stairs should all be corner stairs is for the builders to justify though I do not think they fully understand their trade and never did, else why the sameness and why not more conveniences and fewer draughts and likewise making a practice of laying the plaster on too thick I am well convinced which holds the damp, and as to chimney pots putting them on by guess-work like hats at a party and no more knowing what their effect will be upon the smoke bless you than I do if so much, except that it will mostly be either to send it down your throat in a straight form or give it a turn before it goes there. And what I says speaking as I find of those new metal chimneys all manner of shapes (there's a row of 'em at Miss Wozenham's lodging-house lower down on the other side of the way) is that they only work your smoke into artificial patterns for you before you swallow it and that I'd quite as soon swallow mine plain, the flavour being the same, not to mention the conceit of putting up signs on the top of your house to show the forms in which you take your smoke into your inside.

Being here before your eyes my dear in my own easy-chair in my own quiet room in my own Lodging-House Number Eighty-one Norfolk Street Strand London situated midway between the City and St. James's — if anything is where it used to be with these hotels calling themselves Limited but called Unlimited by Major Jackman rising up everywhere and rising up into the flagstaffs where they can't go any higher, but my mind of those monsters is give me a landlord's or landlady's wholesome face when I come off a journey and not a brass plate with an elec-

trified number clicking out of it which it 's not in nature can be glad to see me and to which I don't want to be hoisted like molasses at the Docks and left there telegraphing for help with the most ingenious instruments but quite in vain — being here my dear I have no call to mention that I am still in the Lodgings as a business hoping to die in the same and if agreeable to the clergy partly read over at St. Clement's Danes and concluded in Hatfield churchyard when lying once again by my poor Lirriper ashes to ashes and dust to dust.

Neither should I tell you any news my dear in telling you that the major is still a fixture in the Parlours quite as much so as the roof of the house, and that Jemmy is of boys the best and brightest and has ever had kept from him the cruel story of his poor pretty young mother Mrs. Edson being deserted in the second floor and dying in my arms, fully believing that I am his born Gran and him an orphan, though what with engineering since he took a taste for it and him and the major making Locomotives out of parasols broken iron pots and cotton-reels and then absolutely a getting off the line and falling over the table and injuring the passengers almost equal to the originals it really is quite wonderful. And when I says to the major, "Major can't you by *any* means give us a communication with the guard?" the major says quite huffy, "No madam it 's not to be done," and when I says "Why not?" the major says, "That is between us who are in the Railway Interest madam and our friend the Right Honourable Vice-President of the Board of Trade" and if you 'll believe me my dear the major wrote to Jemmy at school to consult him on the answer I should have before I could get even that amount of unsatisfactoriness out of the man, the reason being that when we first began with the little model and the working signals beautiful and perfect (being in general as wrong as the real) and when I says laughing "What appointment am I to hold in this undertaking gentlemen?" Jemmy hugs me round the neck and tells me dancing, "You shall be the Public Gran" and consequently they put upon me just as much as ever they like and I sit a growling in my easy-chair.

My dear whether it is that a grown man as clever as the major cannot give half his heart and [illegible] ing — even a plaything — but must get i [illegible] it, whether it is so or wheth[illegible]

say, but Jemmy is far outdone by the serious and believing of the major in the management of the United Grand Ju Lirriper and Jackman Great Norfolk Parlour Line, "For my Jemmy with the sparkling eyes when it was chri "we must have a whole mouthful of name Gran or our de Public" and there the young rogue kissed me, "won't up." So the Public took the shares — ten at ninepen immediately when that was spent twelve Preference at a sixpence — and they were all signed by Jemmy and c signed by the major, and between ourselves much bette the money than some shares I have paid for in my tin the same holidays the line was made and worked and and ran excursions and had collisions and burst its boi all sorts of accidents and offences all most regular con pretty. The sense of responsibility entertained by the a military style of station-master my dear starting t train behind time and ringing one of those little bells buy with the little coal-scuttles off the tray round t neck in the street did him honour, but noticing the m night when he is writing out his monthly report to J school of the state of the Rolling Stock and the Perma and all the rest of it (the whole kept upon the maj board and dusted with his own hands every morni varnishing his boots) I notice him as full of thought as full can be and frowning in a fearful manner, but i major does nothing by halves as witness his great going out surveying with Jemmy when he has Jen with, carrying a chain and a measuring-tape and drivi know what improvements right through Westminst and fully believed in the streets to be knocking e upside down by Act of Parliament. As please He come to pass when Jemmy takes to that as a professio

Mentioning my poor Lirriper brings into my hea youngest brother the doctor though the doctor of what it would be hard to say unless Liquor, for neither Pl Music nor yet Law does Joshua Lirriper know a except continually being summoned to the County C having orders made upon him which he runs away once was taken in the passage of this very house wit brella up and the major's hat on, giving his name ber-mat round him as Sir Johnson Jones K. C. B. in

[redacted]

; the Horse Guards. On which occasion he had got
ouse not a minute before, through the girl letting him
t when he sent in a piece of paper twisted more like
se spills for lighting candles than a note, offering me
between thirty shillings in hand and his brains on
ises marked immediate and waiting for an answer.
t gave me such a dreadful turn to think of the brains
r dear Lirriper's own flesh and blood flying about the
th however unworthy to be so assisted, that I went
room here to ask him what he would take once for
do it for life when I found him in the custody of two
that I should have judged to be in the feather-bed
ley had not announced the law, so fluffy were their
ppearance. "Bring your chains sir," says Joshua to
; of the two in the biggest hat, "rivet on my fetters!"
ly feelings when I pictured him clanking up Norfolk
rons and Miss Wozenham looking out of the window!
.en" I says all of a tremble and ready to drop "please
him into Major Jackman's apartments." So they
im into the Parlours, and when the major spies his
-brimmed hat on him which Joshua Lirriper had
off its peg in the passage for a military disguise he
such a tearing passion that he tips it off his head with
and kicks it up to the ceiling with his foot where it
lg afterwards. "Major" I says "be cool and advise
o do with Joshua my dead and gone Lirriper's own
brother." "Madam" says the major "my advice is
board and lodge him in a Powder Mill, with a hand-
urity to the proprietor when exploded." "Major" I
a Christian you cannot mean your words." "Madam"
Major "by the Lord I do!" and indeed the Major
ing with all his merits a very passionate man for his
bad opinion of Joshua on account of former troubles
tended by liberties taken with his apparel. When
rriper hears this conversation betwixt us he turns upon
one with the biggest hat and says "Come sir! Remove
vile dungeon. Where is my mouldy straw?" My
le picter of him rising in my mind dressed almost
padlocks like Baron Trenck in Jemmy's book I was so
that I burst into tears and I says to the major, "Major
eys and settle with these gentlemen or I shall never

know a happy minute more," which was done several times both before and since, but still I must remember that Joshua Lirriper has his good feelings and shows them in being always so troubled in his mind when he cannot wear mourning for his brother. Many a long year have I left off my widow's mourning not being wishful to intrude, but the tender point in Joshua that I cannot help a little yielding to is when he writes "One single sovereign would enable me to wear a decent suit of mourning for my much-loved brother. I vowed at the time of his lamented death that I would ever wear sables in memory of him but Alas how short-sighted is man, How keep that vow when penniless!" It says a good deal for the strength of his feelings that he couldn't have been seven year old when my poor Lirriper died and to have kept to it ever since is highly creditable. But we know there's good in all of us, — if we only knew where it was in some of us — and though it was far from delicate in Joshua to work upon the dear child's feelings when first sent to school and write down into Lincolnshire for his pocket money by return of post and got it, still he is my poor Lirriper's own youngest brother and mightn't have meant not paying his bill at the Salisbury Arms when his affection took him down to stay a fortnight at Hatfield churchyard and might have meant to keep sober but for bad company. Consequently if the major *had* played on him with the garden engine which he got privately into his room without my knowing of it, I think that much as I should have regretted it there would have been words betwixt the major and me. Therefore my dear though he played on Mr. Buffle by mistake being hot in his head, and though it might have been misrepresented down at Wozenham's into not being ready for Mr. Buffle in other respects he being the Assessed Taxes, still I do not much regret it as perhaps I ought. And whether Joshua Lirriper will yet do well in life I cannot say, but I did hear of his coming out at a Private Theatre in the character of a Bandit without receiving any offers afterwards from the regular managers.

Mentioning Mr. Buffle gives an instance of there being good in persons where good is not expected, for it cannot be denied that Mr. Buffle's manners when engaged in his business were not agreeable. To collect is one thing, and to look about as if suspicious of the goods being gradually removing in the dead of the night by a back door is another, over taxing you have no control, but suspecting is voluntary. Allowances too must

[redacted]

made for a gentleman of the major's warmth not being spoke to with a pen in the mouth, and while t know that it is more irritable to my own feelings a low-crowned hat with a broad brim kept on indoors r other hat still I can appreciate the major's, besides rithout bearing malice or vengeance, the major is a t scores up arrears as his habit always was with Lirriper. So at last my dear the major lay in wait Buffle and it worrited me a good deal. Mr. Buffle s rap of two sharp knocks one day and the major to the door. "Collector has called for two quarters' Taxes" says Mr. Buffle. "They are ready for him" major and brings him in here. But on the way fle looks about him in his usual suspicious manner major fires and asks him "Do you see a Ghost "No sir" says Mr. Buffle. "Because I have before 'ou" says the Major "apparently looking for a spectre d beneath the roof of my respected friend. When l that supernatural agent, be so good as point him Mr. Buffle stares at the major and then nods at Mrs. Lirriper sir" says the major going off into a steam and introducing me with his hand. "Pleasure 'ing her" says Mr. Buffle. "A — hum! — Jemmy ı sir!" says the Major introducing himself. "Honour ing you by sight" says Mr. Buffle. "Jemmy Jack-' says the major wagging his head sideways in a sort stinate fury "presents to you his esteemed friend that s. Emma Lirriper of Eighty-one Norfolk Street Strand in the County of Middlesex in the United Kingdom Britain and Ireland. Upon which occasion sir," says r, "Jemmy Jackman takes your hat off." Mr. Buffle his hat where the Major drops it on the floor, and he up and puts it on again. "Sir" says the major very looking him full in the face "there are two quarters Gallantry Taxes due and the Collector has called." hich if you can believe my words my dear the major r. Buffle's hat off again. "This —" Mr. Buffle begins gry with his pen in his mouth, when the major steam-e and more says "Take your bit out sir! Or by the nfernal system of Taxation of this country and every al figure in the National Debt, I'll get upon your back

and ride you like a horse!" which it 's my belief he would have done and even actually jerking his neat little legs for a spring as it was. "This" says Mr. Buffle without his pen "is an assault and I 'll have the law of you." "Sir" replies the major "if you are a man of honour your Collector of whatever may be due on the Honourable Assessment by applying to Major Jackman at the Parlours Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings, may obtain what he wants in full at any moment."

When the major glared at Mr. Buffle with those meaning words my dear I literally gasped for a teaspoonful of sal volatile in a wine-glass of water, and I says "Pray let it go no farther gentlemen I beg and beseech of you!" But the major could be got to do nothing else but snort long after Mr. Buffle was gone, and the effect it had upon my whole mass of blood when on the next day of Mr. Buffle's rounds the major spruced himself up and went humming a tune up and down the street with one eye almost obliterated by his hat, there are not expressions in Johnson's Dictionary to state. But I safely put the street door on the jar, and got behind the major's blinds with my shawl on and my mind made up the moment I saw danger to rush out screeching till my voice failed me and catch the major round the neck till my strength went and have all parties bound. I had not been behind the blinds a quarter of an hour when I saw Mr. Buffle approaching with his Collecting books in his hand. The major likewise saw him approaching and hummed louder and himself approached. They met before the Airy railings. The major takes off his hat at arm's length and says "Mr. Buffle I believe?" Mr. Buffle takes off his hat at arm's length and says "That is my name sir." Says the major "Have you any commands for me, Mr. Buffle?" Says Mr. Buffle "Not any sir." Then my dear both of 'em bowed very low and haughty and parted, and whenever Mr. Buffle made his rounds in future, him and the major always met and bowed before the Airy railings, putting me much in mind of Hamlet and the other gentleman in mourning before killing one another, though I could have wished the other gentleman had done it fairer and even if less polite no poison.

Mr. Buffle's family were not liked in this neighbourhood, for when you are a householder my dear you'll find it does not come by nature to like the Assessed, and it was considered besides that a one-horse pheayton ought not to have elevated

Mrs. Buffle to that heighth especially when purloin the
Taxes which I myself did consider uncharitable. they
were *not* liked and there was that domestic unhap in the
family in consequence of their both being very har th Miss
Buffle and one another on account of Miss Buffle's fa uring Mr.
Buffle's articled young gentleman, that it *was* wh ed that
Miss Buffle would go either into a consumption o convent
she being so very thin and off her appetite and two shaved
gentlemen with white bands round their necks pe round
the corner whenever she went out in waistcoats mbling
black pinafores. So things stood towards Mr. Bufl wnen one
night I was woke by a frightful noise an a s burning,
and going to my bedroom window saw the whole st a glow.
Fortunately we had two sets empty just then and before I could hurry on some clothes I heard the major hammering at the attics' doors and calling out "Dress yourselves! — Fire! Don't be frightened! — Fire! Collect your presence of mind! — Fire! All right — Fire!" most tremenjously. As I opened my bedroom door the major came tumbling in over himself and me, and caught me in his arms. "Major" I says breathless "where is it?" "I don't know dearest madam" says the major — "Fire! Jemmy Jackman will defend you to the last drop of his blood! — Fire! If the dear boy was at home what a treat this would be for him! — Fire!" and altogether very collected and bold except that he could n't say a single sentence without shaking me to the very centre with roaring Fire. We ran down to the drawing-room and put our heads out of window, and the major calls to an unfeeling young monkey, scampering by be joyful and ready to split "Where is it? — Fire!" The monkey answers without stopping "Oh here's a lark! Old Buffle's been setting his house alight to prevent its being found out that he boned the Taxes. Hurrah! Fire!" And then the sparks came flying up and the smoke came pouring down and the crackling of flames and spatting of water and banging of engines and hacking of axes and breaking of glass, and knocking at doors and the shouting and crying and hurrying and the heat and altogether gave me a dreadful palpitation.

"Don't be frightened dearest madam," says the major, "— Fire! There's nothing to be alarmed at — Fire! Don't open the street door till I come back — Fire! I'll go and see if I can be of any service — Fire! You're quite composed and

comfortable ain't you? — Fire, Fire, Fire!" It was in vain for me to hold the man and tell him he'd be galloped to death by the engines — pumped to death by his over-exertions — wet-footed to death by the slop and mess — flattened to death when the roofs fell in — his spirit was up and he went scampering off after the young monkey with all the breath he had and none to spare, and me and the girls huddled together at the parlour windows looking at the dreadful flames above the houses over the way, Mr. Buffle's being round the corner. Presently what should we see but some people running down the street straight to our door, and then the major directing operations in the busiest way, and then some more people and then — carried in a chair similar to Guy Fawkes — Mr. Buffle in a blanket!

My dear the major has Mr. Buffle brought up our steps and whisked into the parlour and carted out on the sofy, and then he and all the rest of them without so much as a word burst away again full speed, leaving the impression of a vision except for Mr. Buffle awful in his blanket with his eyes a rolling. In a twinkling they all burst back again with Mrs. Buffle in another blanket, which whisked in and carted out on the sofy they all burst off again and all burst back again with Miss Buffle in another blanket, which again whisked in and carted out they all burst off again and all burst back again with Mr. Buffle's articled young gentleman in another blanket — him a holding round the necks of two men carrying him by the legs, similar to the picter of the disgraceful creetur who has lost the fight but where the chair I do not know and his hair having the appearance of newly played upon. When all four of a row, the major rubs his hands and whispers me with what little hoarseness he can get together, "If our dear remarkable boy was only at home what a delightful treat this would be for him!"

My dear we made them some hot tea and toast and some hot brandy and water with a little comfortable nutmeg in it, and at first they were scared and low in their spirits but being fully insured got sociable. And the first use Mr. Buffle made of his tongue was to call the major his Preserver and his best of friends and to say "My for ever dearest sir let me make you known to Mrs. Buffle" which also addressed him as her Preserver and her best of friends and was fully as cordial as the blanket would admit of. Also Miss Buffle. The articled young gentleman's head was a little light and he sat a moaning

"Robina is reduced to cinders, Robina is reduced to cinders!" Which went more to the heart on account of his having got wrapped in his blanket as if he was looking out of a violinceller case, until Mr. Buffle says "Robina speak to him!" Miss Buffle says "Dear George!" and but for the major's pouring down brandy and water on the instant which caused a catching in his throat owing to the nutmeg and a violent fit of coughing it might have proved too much for his strength. When the articled young gentleman got the better of it Mr. Buffle leaned up against Mrs. Buffle being two bundles, a little while in confidence, and then says with tears in his eyes which the major noticing wiped, "We have not been an united family, let us after this danger become so, take her George." The young gentleman could not put his arm out far to do it, but his spoken expressions were very beautiful though of a wandering class. And I do not know that I ever had a much pleasanter meal than the breakfast we took together after we had all dozed, when Miss Buffle made tea very sweetly in quite the Roman style as depicted formerly at Covent-Garden Theatre and when the whole family was most agreeable, as they have ever proved since that night when the major stood at the foot of the Fire-Escape and claimed them as they came down — the young gentleman head foremost, which accounts. And though I do not say that we should be less liable to think ill of one another if strictly limited to blankets, still I do say that we might most of us come to a better understanding if we kept one another less at a distance.

Why there 's Wozenham's lower down on the other side of the street. I had a feeling of much soreness several years respecting what I must still ever call Miss Wozenham's systematic underbidding and the likeness of the house in Bradshaw having far too many windows and a most umbrageous and outrageous Oak which never yet was seen in Norfolk Street nor yet a carriage and four at Wozenham's door, which it would have been far more to Bradshaw's credit to have drawn a cab. This frame of mind continued bitter down to the very afternoon in January last when one of my girls, Sally Rairyganoo which I still suspect of Irish extraction though family represented Cambridge, else why abscond with a bricklayer of the Limerick persuasion and be married in pattens not waiting till his black eye was decently got round with all the company fourteen in

number and one horse fighting outside on the roof of the vehicle, — I repeat my dear my ill-regulated state of mind towards Miss Wozenham continued down to the very afternoon of January last past when Sally Rairyganoo came banging (I can use no milder expression) into my room with a jump which may be Cambridge and may not, and said "Hurroo missis! Miss Wozenham's sold up!" My dear when I had it thrown in my face and conscience that the girl Sally had reason to think I could be glad of the ruin of a fellow-creeter, I burst into tears and dropped back in my chair and I says "I am ashamed of myself!"

Well! I tried to settle to my tea but I could not do it what with thinking of Miss Wozenham and her distresses. It was a wretched night and I went up to a front window and looked over at Wozenham's and as well as I could make it out down the street in the fog it was the dismallest of the dismal and not a light to be seen. So at last I says to myself "This will not do," and I puts on my oldest bonnet and shawl not wishing Miss Wozenham to be reminded of my best at such a time, and lo and behold you I goes over to Wozenham's and knocks. "Miss Wozenham at home?" I says turning my head when I heard the door go. And then I saw it was Miss Wozenham herself who had opened it and sadly worn she was poor thing and her eyes all swelled and swelled with crying. "Miss Wozenham" I says "it is several years since there was a little unpleasantness betwixt us on the subject of my grandson's cap being down your Airy. I have overlooked it and I hope you have done the same." "Yes Mrs. Lirriper" she says in a surprise "I have." "Then my dear" I says "I should be glad to come in and speak a word to you." Upon my calling her my dear Miss Wozenham breaks out a crying most pitiful, and a not unfeeling elderly person that might have been better shaved in a nightcap with a hat over it offering a polite apology for the mumps having worked themselves into his constitution, and also for sending home to his wife on the bellows which was in his hand as a writing-desk, looks out of the back parlour and says "The lady wants a word of comfort" and goes in again. So I was able to say quite natural "Wants a word of comfort does she sir? Then please the pigs she shall have it!" And Miss Wozenham and me we go into the front room with a wretched light that seemed to have been crying too and was sputtering out, and I says "Now my dear, tell me

l," and she wrings her hands and says "O Mrs. Lirriper that an is in possession here, and I have not a friend in the world ho is able to help me with a shilling."

It does n't signify a bit what a talkative old body like me id to Miss Wozenham when she said that, and so I 'll tell u instead my dear that I 'd have given thirty shillings to ve taken her over to tea, only I durst n't on account of the ajor. Not you see but what I knew I could draw the major t like thread and wind him round my finger on most subjects d perhaps even on that if I was to set myself to it, but him d me had so often belied Miss Wozenham to one another that was shamefaced, and I knew she had offended his pride and ver mine, and likewise I felt timid that that Rairyganoo girl ght make things awkward. So I says "My dear if you could ve me a cup of tea to clear my muddle of a head I should tter understand your affairs." And we had the tea and the airs too and after all it was but forty pound, and — There! e 's as industrious and straight a creeter as ever lived and has id back half of it already, and where 's the use of saying ore, particularly when it ain't the point? For the point is at when she was a kissing my hands and holding them in rs and kissing them again and blessing blessing blessing, I eered up at last and I says "Why what a waddling old ose I have been my dear to take you for something so very fferent!" "Ah but I too" says she "how have *I* mistaken u!" "Come for goodness' sake tell me" I says "what you ought of me?" "Oh" says she "I thought you had no eling for such a hard hand-to-mouth life as mine, and were lling in affluence." I says shaking my sides (and very glad do it for I had been a choking quite long enough) "Only ok at my figure my dear and give me your opinion whether if was in affluence I should be likely to roll in it?" That d it! We got as merry as grigs (whatever *they* are, if you ppen to know my dear — *I* don't) and I went home to my essed home as happy and as thankful as could be. But before make an end of it, think even of my having misunderstood e major! Yes! For next forenoon the major came into y little room with his brushed hat in his hand and he begins My dearest madam —" and then put his face in his hat as if had just come into church. As I sat all in a maze he came it of his hat and began again. "My esteemed and beloved

friend — " and then went into his hat again. "Major," I cries out frightened "has anything happened to our darling boy?" "No, no, no" says the major "but Miss Wozenham has been here this morning to make her excuses to me, and by the Lord I can't get over what she told me." "Hoity toity, Major," I says "you don't know yet that I was afraid of you last night and did n't think half as well of you as I ought! So come out of church Major and forgive me like a dear old friend and I'll never do so any more." And I leave you to judge my dear whether I ever did or will. And how affecting to think of Miss Wozenham out of her small income and her losses doing so much for her poor old father, and keeping a brother that had had the misfortune to soften his brain against the hard mathematics as neat as a new pin in the three back represented to lodgers as a lumber-room and consuming a whole shoulder of mutton whenever provided!

And now my dear I really am a going to tell you about my Legacy if you 're inclined to favour me with your attention, and I did fully intend to have come straight to it only one thing does so bring up another. It was the month of June and the day before Midsummer Day when my girl Winifred Madgers — she was what is termed a Plymouth Sister, and the Plymouth Brother that made away with her was quite right for a tidier young woman for a wife never came into a house and afterwards called with the beautifullest Plymouth Twins — it was the day before Midsummer Day when Winifred Madgers comes and says to me "A gentleman from the Consul's wishes particular to speak to Mrs. Lirriper." If you 'll believe me my dear the Consols at the bank where I have a little matter for Jemmy got into my head, and I says "Good gracious I hope he ain't had any dreadful fall!" Says Winifred "He don't look as if he had ma'am." And I says "Show him in."

The gentleman came in dark and with his hair cropped what I should consider too close, and he says very polite "Madame Lirrwiper!" I says "Yes sir. Take a chair." "I come," says he "frrwom the Frrwench Consul's." So I saw at once that it was n't the Bank of England. "We have rrweceived," says the gentleman turning his r's very curious and skilful, "frrwom the Mairrwie at Sens, a communication which I will have the honour to rrwead. Madame Lirrwiper understands Frrwench?" "Oh dear no sir!" says I. "Madame Lirriper don't understand

anything of the sort." "It matters not," says the gentleman, "I will trrwanslate."

With that my dear the gentleman after reading something about a Department and a Marie (which Lord forgive me I supposed till the major came home was Mary, and never was I more puzzled than to think how that young woman came to have so much to do with it) translated a lot with the most obliging pains, and it came to this: That in the town of Sens in France an unknown Englishman lay a dying. That he was speechless and without motion. That in his lodging there was a gold watch and a purse containing such and such money and a trunk containing such and such clothes, but no passport and no papers, except that on his table was a pack of cards and that he had written in pencil on the back of the ace of hearts: 'To the authorities. When I am dead, pray send what is left, as a last Legacy, to Mrs. Lirriper Eighty-one Norfolk Street Strand London." When the gentleman had explained all this, which seemed to be drawn up much more methodical than I should have given the French credit for, not at that time knowing the nation, he put the document into my hand. And much the wiser I was for that you may be sure, except that it had the look of being made out upon grocery paper and was stamped all over with eagles.

"Does Madame Lirrwiper" says the gentleman, "believe she rwecognises her unfortunate compatrrwiot?"

You may imagine the flurry it put me into my dear to be talked to about my compariots.

I says "Excuse me. Would you have the kindness sir to make your language as simple as you can?"

"This Englishman unhappy, at the point of death. This compatrrwiot afflicted," says the gentleman.

"Thank you sir" I says "I understand you now. No sir I have not the least idea who this can be."

"Has Madame Lirrwiper no son, no nephew, no godson, no frrwiend, no acquaintance of any kind in Frrwance?"

"To my certain knowledge" says I "no relation or friend, and to the best of my belief no acquaintance."

"Pardon me. You take Locataires?" says the gentleman.

My dear fully believing he was offering me something with his obliging foreign manners, — snuff for anything I knew, — I

gave a little bend of my head and I says if you'll credit it, "No I thank you. I have not contracted the habit."

The gentleman looks perplexed and says "Lodgers?"

"Oh!" says I laughing. "Bless the man! Why yes to be sure!"

"May it not be a former lodger?" says the gentleman. "Some lodger that you pardoned some arrears? You have pardoned lodgers some arrears?"

"Hem! It has happened sir" says I, "but I assure you I can call to mind no gentleman of that description that this is at all likely to be."

In short my dear, we could make nothing of it, and the gentleman noted down what I said and went away. But he left me the paper of which he had two with him, and when the major came in I says to the major as I put it in his hand "Major here's old Moore's Almanac with the hieroglyphs complete, for your opinion."

It took the major a little longer to read than I should have thought, judging from the copious flow with which he seemed to be gifted when attacking the organ-men, but at last he got through it and stood a gazing at me in amazement.

"Major" I says, "you're paralysed."

"Madam," says the major, "Jemmy Jackman is doubled up."

Now it did so happen that the major had been out to get a little information about railroads and steamboats, as our boy was coming home for his Midsummer holidays next day and we were going to take him somewhere for a treat and a change. So while the major stood a gazing it came into my head to say to him "Major I wish you'd go and look at some of your books and maps, and see whereabouts this same town of Sens is in France."

The major he roused himself and he went into the Parlours and he poked about a little, and he came back to me and says "Sens my dearest madam is seventy odd miles south of Paris."

With what I may truly call a desperate effort "Major" I says "we'll go there with our blessed boy!"

If ever the major was beside himself it was at the thoughts of that journey. All day long he was like the wild man of the woods after meeting with an advertisement in the papers telling him something to his advantage, and early next morning hours

before Jemmy could possibly come home he was outside in the street ready to call out to him that we was all a going to France. Young Rosy-cheeks you may believe was as wild as the major, and they did carry on to that degree that I says, "If you two children ain't more orderly I 'll pack you both off to bed." And then they fell to cleaning up the major's telescope to see France with, and went out and bought a leather bag with a snap to hang round Jemmy, and him to carry the money like a little Fortunatus with his purse.

If I had n't passed my word and raised their hopes, I doubt if I could have gone through with the undertaking but it was too late to go back now. So on the second day after Midsummer Day we went off by the morning mail. And when we came to the sea which I had never seen but once in my life and that when my poor Lirriper was courting me, the freshness of it and the deepness and the airiness and to think that it had been rolling ever since and that it was always a rolling and so few of us minding, made me feel quite serious. But I felt happy too and so did Jemmy and the major and not much motion on the whole, though me with a swimming in the head and a sinking but able to take notice that the foreign insides appear to be constructed hollower than the English, leading to much more tremenjous noises when bad sailors.

But my dear the blueness and the lightness and the coloured look of everything and the very sentry-boxes striped and the shining rattling drums and the little soldiers with their waists and tidy gaiters, when we got across to the Continent — it made me feel as if I don't know what — as if the atmosphere had been lifted off me. And as to lunch why bless you if I kept a man-cook and two kitchen-maids I could n't get it done for twice the money, and no injured young women a glaring at you and grudging you and acknowledging your patronage by wishing that your food might choke you but so civil and so hot and attentive and every way comfortable except Jemmy pouring wine down his throat by tumblers-full and me expecting to see him drop under the table.

And the way in which Jemmy spoke his French was a real charm. It was often wanted of him, for whenever anybody spoke a syllable to me I says "Noncomprenny you 're very kind, but it 's no use — Now Jemmy!" and then Jemmy he fires away at 'em lovely the only thing wanting in Jemmy's

French being as it appeared to me that he hardly ever understood a word of what they said to him which made it rather of the use it might have been though in other respects a perfect Native, and regarding the major's fluency I should have been of the opinion judging French by English that there might have been a greater choice of words in the language though still I must admit that if I had n't known him when he asked a military gentleman in a grey cloak what o'clock it was I should have took him for a Frenchman born.

Before going on to look after my Legacy we were to make one regular day in Paris, and I leave you to judge my dear what a day *that* was with Jemmy and the major and the telescope and me and the prowling young man at the inn door (but very civil too) that went along with us to show the sights. All along the railway to Paris Jemmy and the major had been frightening me to death by stooping down on the platforms at stations to inspect the engines underneath their mechanical stomachs, and by creeping in and out I don't know where all, to find improvements for the United Grand Junction Parlour, but when we got out into the brilliant streets on a bright morning they gave up all their London improvements as a bad job and gave their minds to Paris. Says the prowling young man to me "Will I speak Inglis No?" So I says "If you can young man I shall take it as a favour," but after half an hour of it when I fully believed the man had gone mad and me too I says "Be so good as fall back on your French sir," knowing that then I should n't have the agonies of trying to understand him which was a happy release. Not that I lost much more than the rest either, for I generally noticed that when he had described something very long indeed and I says to Jemmy "What does he say Jemmy?" Jemmy says looking with vengeance in his eye "He is so jolly indistinct!" and that when he had described it longer all over again and I says to Jemmy "Well Jemmy what 's it all about?" Jemmy says "He says the building was repaired in seventeen hundred and four, Gran."

Wherever that prowling young man formed his prowling habits I cannot be expected to know, but the way in which he went round the corner while we had our breakfasts and was there again when we swallowed the last crumb was most marvellous, and just the same at dinner and at night, prowling

equally at the theatre and the inn gateway and the shop-doors when we bought a trifle or two and everywhere else but troubled with a tendency to spit. And of Paris I can tell you no more my dear than that it's town and country both in one, and carved stone and long streets of high houses and gardens and fountains and statues and trees and gold and immensely big soldiers and immensely little soldiers and the pleasantest nurses with the whitest caps a playing at skipping-rope with the bunchiest babies in the flattest caps, and clean table-cloths spread everywhere for dinner and people sitting out of doors smoking and sipping all day long and little plays being acted in the open air for little people and every shop a complete and elegant room, and everybody seeming to play at everything in this world. And as to the sparkling lights my dear after dark, glittering high up and low down and on before and on behind and all round, and the crowd of theatres and the crowd of people and the crowd of all sorts, it's pure enchantment. And pretty well the only thing that grated on me was that whether you pay your fare at the railway or whether you change your money at a money-dealer's or whether you take your ticket at the theatre, the lady or gentleman is caged up (I suppose by government) behind the strongest iron bars having more of a Zoölogical appearance than a free country.

Well to be sure when I did after all get my precious bones to bed that night, and my Young Rogue came in to kiss me and asks "What do you think of this lovely lovely Paris, Gran?" I says "Jemmy I feel as if it was beautiful fireworks being let off in my head." And very cool and refreshing the pleasant country was next day when we went on to look after my Legacy, and rested me much and did me a deal of good.

So at length and at last my dear we come to Sens, a pretty little town with a great two-towered cathedral and the rooks flying in and out of the loopholes and another tower atop of one of the towers like a sort of a stone pulpit. In which pulpit with the birds skimming below him if you'll believe me, I saw a speck while I was resting at the inn before dinner which they made signs to me was Jemmy and which really was. I had been a fancying as I sat in the balcony of the hotel that an Angel might light there and call down to the people to be good, but I little thought what Jemmy all unknown to himself was a calling down from that high place to some one in the town.

The pleasantest-situated inn my dear! Right under the two towers, with their shadows a changing upon it all day like a kind of a sun-dial, and country people driving in and out of the courtyard in carts and hooded cabriolets and such like, and a market outside in front of the cathedral, and all so quaint and like a picter. The major and me agreed that whatever came of my Legacy this was the place to stay in for our holiday, and we also agreed that our dear boy had best not be checked in his joy that night by the sight of the Englishman if he was still alive, but that we would go together and alone. For you are to understand that the major not feeling himself quite equal in his wind to the height to which Jemmy had climbed, had come back to me and left him with the Guide.

So after dinner when Jemmy had set off to see the river, the major went down to the Mairie, and presently came back with a military character in a sword and spurs and a cocked-hat and a yellow shoulder-belt and long tags about him that he must have found inconvenient. And the major says, "The Englishman still lies in the same state dearest madam. This gentleman will conduct us to his lodging." Upon which the military character pulled off his cocked-hat to me, and I took notice that he had shaved his forehead in imitation of Napoleon Bonaparte but not like.

We went out at the courtyard gate and passed the great doors of the cathedral and down a narrow High-street where the people were sitting chatting at their shop doors and the children were at play. The military character went in front and he stopped at a pork-shop with a little statue of a pig sitting up in the window, and a private door that a donkey was looking out of.

When the donkey saw the military character he came slipping out on the pavement to turn round and then clattered along the passage into a back yard. So the coast being clear, the major and me were conducted up the common stair and into the front room on the second, a bare room with a red tiled floor and the outside lattice blinds pulled close to darken it. As the military character opened the blinds I saw the tower where I had seen Jemmy, darkening as the sun got low, and I turned to the bed by the wall and saw the Englishman.

It was some kind of brain fever he had had, and his hair was all gone, and some wetted folded linen lay upon his head.

looked at him very attentive as he lay there all wasted away with his eyes closed, and I says to the major: —

"I never saw this face before."

The major looked at him very attentive too, and he says: —

"*I* never saw this face before."

When the major explained our words to the military character, that gentleman shrugged his shoulders and showed the major the card on which it was written about the Legacy for me.

It had been written with a weak and trembling hand in bed, and I knew no more of the writing than of the face. Neither did the major.

Though lying there alone, the poor creetur was as well taken care of as could be hoped, and would have been quite unconscious of any one's sitting by him then. I got the major to say that we were not going away at present and that I would come back to-morrow and watch a bit by the bedside. But I got him to add — and I shook my head hard to make it stronger — "We agree that we never saw this face before."

Our boy was greatly surprised when we told him sitting out in the balcony in the starlight, and he ran over some of those stories of former Lodgers, of the major's putting down, and asked was n't it possible that it might be this lodger or that lodger. It was not possible, and we went to bed.

In the morning just at breakfast-time the military character came jingling round, and said that the doctor thought from the signs he saw there might be some rally before the end. So I says to the major and Jemmy, "You two boys go and enjoy yourselves, and I'll take my Prayer-book and go sit by the bed." So I went, and I sat there some hours, reading a prayer for him poor soul now and then, and it was quite on in the day when he moved his hand.

He had been so still, that the moment he moved I knew of it, and I pulled off my spectacles and laid down my book and rose and looked at him. From moving one hand he began to move both, and then his action was the action of a person groping in the dark. Long after his eyes had opened, there was a film over them and he still felt for his way out into light. But by slow degrees his sight cleared and his hands stopped. He saw the ceiling, he saw the wall, he saw me. As his sight cleared, mine cleared too, and when at last we looked in one another's faces, I started back and I cries passionately: —

"Oh, you wicked, wicked man! Your sin has found you out!"

For I knew him, the moment life looked out of his eyes, to be Mr. Edson, Jemmy's father who had so cruelly deserted Jemmy's young unmarried mother who had died in my arms, poor tender creetur, and left Jemmy to me.

"You cruel wicked man! You bad black traitor!"

With the little strength he had, he made an attempt to turn over on his wretched face to hide it. His arm dropped out of the bed and his head with it, and there he lay before me crushed in body and in mind. Surely the miserablest sight under the summer sun!

"O blessed Heaven," I says a crying, "teach me what to say to this broken mortal! I am a poor sinful creetur, and the Judgment is not mine."

As I lifted my eyes up to the clear bright sky, I saw the high tower where Jemmy had stood above the birds, seeing that very window; and the last look of that poor pretty young mother when her soul brightened and got free, seemed to shine down from it.

"O man, man, man!" I says, and I went on my knees beside the bed; "if your heart is rent asunder and you are truly penitent for what you did, Our Saviour will have mercy on you yet!"

As I leaned my face against the bed, his feeble hand could just move itself enough to touch me. I hope the touch was penitent. It tried to hold my dress and keep hold, but the fingers were too weak to close.

I lifted him back upon the pillows, and I says to him —

"Can you hear me?"

He looked yes.

"Do you know me?"

He looked yes, even yet more plainly.

"I am not here alone. The major is with me. You recollect the major?"

Yes. That is to say he made out yes, in the same way as before.

"And even the major and I are not alone. My grandson — his godson — is with us. Do you hear? My grandson."

The fingers made another trial to catch at my sleeve, but could only creep near it and fall.

"Do you know who my grandson is?"

Yes.

"I pitied and loved his lonely mother. When his mother lay a dying I said to her, 'My dear, this baby is sent to a childless old woman.' He has been my pride and joy ever since. I love him as dearly as if he had drunk from my breast. Do you ask to see my grandson before you die?"

Yes.

"Show me, when I leave off speaking, if you correctly understand what I say. He has been kept unacquainted with the story of his birth. He has no knowledge of it. No suspicion of it. If I bring him here to the side of this bed, he will suppose you to be a perfect stranger. It is more than I can do to keep from him the knowledge that there is such wrong and misery in the world; but that it was ever so near him in his innocent cradle I have kept from him, and I do keep from him, and I ever will keep from him, for his mother's sake, and for his own."

He showed me that he distinctly understood, and the tears fell from his eyes.

"Now rest, and you shall see him."

So I got him a little wine and some brandy, and I put things straight about his bed. But I began to be troubled in my mind lest Jemmy and the major might be too long of coming back. What with this occupation for my thoughts and hands, I did n't hear a foot upon the stairs, and was startled when I saw the major stopped short in the middle of the room by the eyes of the man upon the bed, and knowing him then, as I had known him a little while ago.

There was anger in the major's face, and there was horror and repugnance and I don't know what. So I went up to him and I led him to the bedside, and when I clasped my hands and lifted of them up, the major did the like.

"O Lord," I says, "Thou knowest what we two saw together of the sufferings and sorrows of that young creetur now with Thee. If this dying man is truly penitent, we two together humbly pray Thee to have mercy on him!"

The major says "Amen!" and then after a little stop I whispers him, "Dear old friend fetch our beloved boy." And the major, so clever as to have got to understand it all without being told a word, went away and brought him.

Never, never, never shall I forget the fair bright face of our boy when he stood at the foot of the bed, looking at his unknown father. And oh so like his dear young mother then!

"Jemmy," I says, "I have found out all about this poor gentleman who is so ill, and he did lodge in the old house once. And as he wants to see all belonging to it, now that he is passing away, I sent for you."

"Ah, poor man!" says Jemmy stepping forward and touching one of his hands with great gentleness. "My heart melts for him. Poor, poor man!"

The eyes that were so soon to close for ever turned to me, and I was not that strong in the pride of my strength that I could resist them.

"My darling boy, there is a reason in the secret history of this fellow-creetur, lying as the best and worst of us must all lie one day, which I think would ease his spirit in his last hour if you would lay your cheek against his forehead and say, 'May God forgive you!'"

"O Gran," says Jemmy with a full heart, "I am not worthy!" But he leaned down and did it. Then the faltering fingers made out to catch hold of my sleeve at last, and I believe he was a trying to kiss me when he died.

. . . .

There my dear! There you have the story of my Legacy in full, and it's worth ten times the trouble I have spent upon it if you are pleased to like it.

You might suppose that it set us against the little French town of Sens, but no we didn't find that. I found myself that I never looked up at the high tower atop of the other tower but the days came back again when that fair young creetur with her pretty bright hair trusted in me like a mother, and the recollection made the place so peaceful to me as I can't express. And every soul about the hotel down to the pigeons in the courtyard made friends with Jemmy and the major, and went lumbering away with them on all sorts of expeditions in all sorts of vehicles drawn by rampagious cart-horses, — with heads and without, — mud for paint and ropes for harness, — and every new friend dressed in blue like a butcher, and every new horse standing on his hind legs wanting to devour and consume every other horse, and every man that had a whip to crack crack-crack-crack-crack-cracking it as if it was a schoolboy with

his first. As to the major my dear that man lived ter part of his time with a little tumbler in one hand a ottle of small wine in the other, and whenever he saw a dy else with a little tumbler, no matter who it was, — t litary character with the tags, or the inn servants at thei per in the courtyard, or townspeople a chatting on a bench, or ntry-people a starting home after market, — down rushe najor to clink his glass against their glasses and cry, — H Vive Somebody! or Vive Something! as if he was beside himself. And though I could not quite approve of the majo oing still the ways of the world are the ways of the wo varyi according to the different parts of it, and dancing at all in the open Square with a lady that kept a barber's shop my opinion is that the major was right to dance his best and to lead off with a power that I did not think was in him, though I was a little uneasy at the Barricading sound of the cries that were set up by the other dancers and the rest of the company, until when I says "What are they ever calling out Jemmy?" Jemmy says, "They 're calling out Gran, Bravo the Military English! Bravo the Military English!" which was very gratifying to my feelings as a Briton and became the name the major was known by.

But every evening at a regular time we all three sat out in the balcony of the hotel at the end of the courtyard, looking up at the golden and rosy light as it changed on the great towers, and looking at the shadows of the towers as they changed on all about us, ourselves included, and what do you think we did there? My dear, if Jemmy had n't brought some other of those stories of the major's taking down from the telling of former lodgers at Eighty-one Norfolk Street, and if he did n't bring 'em out with this speech: —

"Here you are Gran! Here you are godfather! More of 'em! *I* 'll read. And though you wrote 'em for me, godfather, I know you won't disapprove of my making 'em over to Gran; will you?"

"No my dear boy," says the major. "Everything we have is hers, and we are hers."

"Hers ever affectionately and devotedly J. Jackman, and J. Jackman Lirriper," cries the Young Rogue giving me a close hug. "Very well then godfather. Look here. As Gran is in the Legacy way just now, I shall make these stories a part of

Gran's Legacy. I'll leave 'em to her. What do you say godfather?"

"Hip hip Hurrah!" says the major.

"Very well then," cries Jemmy all in a bustle. "Vive the Military English! Vive the Lady Lirriper! Vive the Jemmy Jackman ditto! Vive the Legacy! Now, you look out, Gran. And you look out, godfather! *I*'ll read! And I'll tell you what I'll do besides. On the last night of our holiday here when we are all packed and going away, I'll top up with something of my own."

"Mind you do sir" says I.[1]

CHAPTER VII

MRS. LIRRIPER RELATES HOW JEMMY TOPPED UP

Well my dear and so the evening readings of those jottings of the major's brought us round at last to the evening when we were all packed and going away next day, and I do assure you that by that time though it was deliciously comfortable to look forward to the dear old house in Norfolk Street again, I had formed quite a high opinion of the French nation and had noticed them to be much more homely and domestic in their families and far more simple and amiable in their lives than I had ever been led to expect, and it did strike me between ourselves that in one particular they might be imitated to advantage by another nation which I will not mention, and that is in the courage with which they take their little enjoyments on little means and with little things and don't let solemn big-wigs stare them out of countenance or speechify them dull, of which said solemn big-wigs I have ever had the one opinion that I wish they were all made comfortable separately in coppers with the lids on and never let out any more.

"Now young man," I says to Jemmy when we brought our chairs into the balcony that last evening, "you please to remember who was to 'top up.'"

"All right Gran" says Jemmy. "I am the illustrious personage."

But he looked so serious after he had made me that an-

[1] The chapters which follow were not by Mr Dickens.

answer, that the major raised his eyebrows at me and I raised mine at the major.

"Gran and godfather," says Jemmy, "you can hardly think how much my mind has run on Mr. Edson's death."

It gave me a little check. "Ah! it was a sad scene my love" I says, "and sad remembrances come back stronger than merry. But this" I says after a little silence, to rouse myself and the major and Jemmy all together, "is not topping up. Tell us your story my dear."

"I will" says Jemmy.

"What is the date sir?" says I. "Once upon a time when pigs drank wine?"

"No Gran," says Jemmy, still serious; "once upon a time when the French drank wine."

Again I glanced at the major, and the major glanced at me.

"In short, Gran and godfather," says Jemmy, looking up, "the date is this time, and I'm going to tell you Mr. Edson's story."

The flutter that it threw me into! The change of colour on the part of the major!

"That is to say, you understand," our bright-eyed boy says, "I am going to give you my version of it. I shall not ask whether it's right or not, firstly because you said you knew very little about it, Gran, and secondly because what little you did know was a secret."

I folded my hands in my lap and I never took my eyes off Jemmy as he went running on.

"The unfortunate gentleman" Jemmy commences, "who is the subject of our present narrative was the son of Somebody, and was born Somewhere, and chose a profession Somehow. It is not with those parts of his career that we have to deal; but with his early attachment to a young and beautiful lady."

I thought I should have dropped. I durst n't look at the major; but I knew what his state was, without looking at him.

"The father of our ill-starred hero" says Jemmy, copying as it seemed to me the style of some of his story-books, "was a worldly man who entertained ambitious views for his only son and who firmly set his face against the contemplated alliance with a virtuous but penniless orphan. Indeed he went so far as roundly to assure our hero that unless he weaned his thoughts

from the object of his devoted affection, he would disinherit him. At the same time he proposed as a suitable match the daughter of a neighbouring gentleman of a good estate, who was neither ill favoured nor unamiable, and whose eligibility in a pecuniary point of view could not be disputed. But young Mr. Edson, true to the first and only love that had inflamed his breast, rejected all considerations of self-advancement, and, deprecating his father's anger in a respectful letter, ran away with her."

My dear I had begun to take a turn for the better, but when it come to running away I began to take another turn for the worse.

"The lovers" says Jemmy "fled to London and were united at the altar of St. Clement's Danes. And it is at this period of their simple but touching story that we find them inmates of the dwelling of a highly respected and beloved lady of the name of Gran, residing within a hundred miles of Norfolk Street."

I felt that we were almost safe now, I felt that the dear boy had no suspicion of the bitter truth, and I looked at the major for the first time and drew a long breath. The major gave me a nod.

"Our hero's father" Jemmy goes on "proving implacable and carrying his threat into unrelenting execution, the struggles of the young couple in London were severe, and would have been far more so, but for their good angel's having conducted them to the abode of Mrs. Gran; who, divining their poverty (in spite of their endeavours to conceal it from her), by a thousand delicate arts smoothed their rough way, and alleviated the sharpness of their first distress."

Here Jemmy took one of my hands in one of his, and began a marking the turns of his story by making me give a beat from time to time upon his other hand.

"After awhile, they left the house of Mrs. Gran, and pursued their fortunes through a variety of successes and failures elsewhere. But in all reverses, whether for good or evil, the words of Mr. Edson to the fair young partner of his life were, 'Unchanging Love and Truth will carry us through all!'"

My hand trembled in the dear boy's, those words were so woefully unlike the fact.

"'Unchanging Love and Truth'" says Jemmy over again, as if he had a proud kind of a noble pleasure in it, "'will carry us

through all!' Those were his words. And so they fought their way, poor but gallant and happy, until Mrs. Edson gave birth to a child."

"A daughter," I says.

"No" says Jemmy, "a son. And the father was so proud of it that he could hardly bear it out of his sight. But a dark cloud overspread the scene. Mrs. Edson sickened, drooped, and died."

"Ah! Sickened, drooped, and died!" I says.

"And so Mr. Edson's only comfort, only hope on earth, and only stimulus to action was his darling boy. As the child grew older, he grew so like his mother that he was her living picture. It used to make him wonder why his father cried when he kissed him. But unhappily he was like his mother in constitution as well as in face, and he died too before he had grown out of childhood. Then Mr. Edson who had good abilities, in his forlornness and despair threw them all to the winds. He became apathetic, reckless, lost. Little by little he sank down, down, down, down, until at last he almost lived (I think) by gaming. And so sickness overtook him in the town of Sens in France, and he lay down to die. But now that he laid him down when all was done, and looked back upon the green Past beyond the time when he had covered it with ashes, he thought gratefully of the good Mrs. Gran long lost sight of, who had been so kind to him and his young wife in the early days of their marriage, and he left the little that he had as a last Legacy to her. And she, being brought to see him, at first no more knew him than she would know from seeing the ruin of a Greek or Roman Temple, what it used to be before it fell; but at length she remembered him. And then he told her, with tears, of his regret for the misspent part of his life, and besought her to think as mildly of it as she could, because it was the poor fallen Angel of his unchanging Love and Constancy after all. And because she had her grandson with her, and he fancied that his own boy, if he had lived, might have grown to be something like him, he asked her to let him touch his forehead with his cheek and say certain parting words."

Jemmy's voice sank low when it got to that, and tears filled my eyes, and filled the major's.

"You little Conjurer" I says, "how did you ever make it all out? Go in and write it every word down, for it's a wonder."

[illegible]

was born on the Queen's highway, but it was the King's at that time. A doctor was fetched to my own mother by my own father, when it took place on a common; and in consequence of his being a very kind gentleman, and accepting no fee but a tea-tray, I was named Doctor, out of gratitude and compliment to him. There you have me. Doctor Marigold.

I am at present a middle-aged man of a broadish build, in cords, leggings, and a sleeved waistcoat the strings of which is always gone behind. Repair them how you will, they go like fiddle-strings. You have been to the theatre, and you have seen one of the violin-players screw up his violin, after listening to it as if it had been whispering the secret to him that it feared it was out of order, and then you have heard it snap. That's as exactly similar to my waistcoat as a waistcoat and a violin can be like one another.

[redacted]

The doctor having accepted a tea-tray, you 'll guess that my father was a Cheap Jack before me. You are right. He was. It was a pretty tray. It represented a large lady going along a serpentine up-hill gravel walk, to attend a little church. Two swans had likewise come astray with the same intentions. When I call her a large lady, I don't mean in point of breadth, for there she fell below my views, but she more than made it up in heighth; her heighth and slimness was — in short, the heighth of both.

I often saw that tray, after I was the innocently smiling cause (or more likely screeching one) of the doctor's standing it up on a table against the wall in his consulting-room. Whenever my own father and mother were in that part of the country, I used to put my head (I have heard my own mother say it was flaxen curls at that time, though you would n't know an old hearth-broom from it now till you came to the handle, and found it was n't me) in at the doctor's door, and the doctor was always glad to see me, and said, "Aha, my brother practitioner! Come in, little M. D. How are your inclinations as to sixpence?"

You can't go on for ever, you 'll find, nor yet could my father nor yet my mother. If you don't go off as a whole when you are about due, you 're liable to go off in part, and two to one your head 's the part. Gradually my father went off his, and my mother went off hers. It was in a harmless way, but it put out the family where I boarded them. The old couple, though retired, got to be wholly and solely devoted to the Cheap-Jack business, and were always selling the family off. Whenever the cloth was laid for dinner, my father began rattling the plates and dishes, as we do in our line when we put up crockery for a bid, only he had lost the trick of it, and mostly let 'em drop and broke 'em. As the old lady had been used to sit in the cart, and hand the articles out one by one to the old gentleman on the foot-board to sell, just in the same way she handed him every item of the family's property, and they disposed of it in their own imaginations from morning to night. At last the old gentleman, lying bedridden in the same room with the old lady, cries out in the old patter, fluent, after having been silent for two days and nights: "Now here, my jolly companions every one, — which the Nightingale Club in a village was held, At the sign of the Cabbage and Shears, Where

the singers no doubt would have greatly excelled, But for want of taste, voices, and ears, — now, here, my jolly companions every one, is a working model of a used-up old Cheap Jack, without a tooth in his head, and with a pain in every bone; so like life that it would be just as good if it was n't better, just as bad if it was n't worse, and just as new if it was n't worn out. Bid for the working model of the old Cheap Jack, who has drunk more gunpowder tea with the ladies in his time than would blow the lid off a washerwoman's copper, and carry it as many thousands of miles higher than the moon as nought nix nought, divided by the national debt, carry nothing to the poor-rates, three under and two over. Now, my hearts of oak and men of straw, what do you say for the lot? Two shillings, a shilling? tenpence, eightpence, sixpence, fourpence. Twopence? Who said twopence? The gentleman in the scarecrow's hat. I am ashamed of the gentleman in the scarecrow's hat. I really am ashamed of him for his want of public spirit. Now I 'll tell you what I 'll do with you. Come, I 'll throw you in a working model of a old woman that was married to the old Cheap Jack so long ago that upon my word and honour it took place in Noah's Ark, before the Unicorn could get in to forbid the banns by blowing a tune upon his horn. There now! Come! What do you say for both? I 'll tell you what I 'll do with you. I don't bear you malice for being so backward. Here! If you make me a bid that 'll only reflect a little credit on your town, I 'll throw you in a warming-pan for nothing, and lend you a toasting-fork for life. Now come; what do you say after that splendid offer? Say two pounds, say thirty shillings, say a pound, say ten shillings, say five, say two-and-six. You don't say even two-and-six? You say two-and-three? No. You shan't have the lot for two-and-three. I 'd sooner give it you, if you was good-looking enough. Here! Missis! Chuck the old man and woman into the cart, put the horse to, and drive 'em away and bury 'em!" Such were the last words of Willum Marigold, my own father, and they were carried out, by him and by his wife, my own mother, on one and the same day, as I ought to know, having followed as mourner.

My father had been a lovely one in his time at the Cheap-Jack work, as his dying observations went to prove. But I top him. I don't say it because it 's myself, but because it has

been universally acknowledged by all that has [illegible] of comparison. I have worked at it. I have [illegible] against other public speakers, Members of P[illegible] forms, Pulpits, Counsel learned in the law, [illegible] found 'em good, I have took a bit of imagination from [illegible] where I have found 'em bad, I have let 'em alone. [illegible] tell you what. I mean to go down into my grave [illegible] that of all the callings ill used in Great Britain, [illegible] calling is the worst used. Why ain't we a profession? [illegible] ain't we endowed with privileges? Why are we [illegible] out a hawker's licence, when no such thing is expected [illegible] political hawkers? Where's the difference [illegible] Except that we are Cheap Jacks and they are Dear [illegible] don't see any difference but what's in our favour.

For look here! Say it's election time. I [illegible] board of my cart in the market-place on a Saturday [illegible] put up a general miscellaneous lot. I [illegible] free and independent woters, I'm a going to [illegible]

[illegible]

you, for you have n't got it. Do you say ten shillings? you, for you owe more to the tallyman. Well, then, I'll you what I'll do with you. I'll heap 'em all on the foot-rd of the cart, — there they are! razors, flat-iron, frying-pan, onometer watch, dinner plates, rolling-pin, and looking-glass, ake 'em all away for four shillings, and I'll give you six-ce for your trouble!" This is me, the Cheap Jack. But the Monday morning, in the same market-place, comes the r Jack on the hustings — *his* cart — and what does *he* say? ow, my free and independent woters, I am a going to give such a chance" (he begins just like me) "as you never had ll your born days, and that's the chance of sending Myself Parliament. Now I'll tell you what I am a going to do for . Here's the interests of this magnificent town promoted ve all the rest of the civilised and uncivilised earth. Here's r railways carried, and your neighbours' railways jockeyed. e's all your sons in the Post Office. Here's Britannia ling on you. Here's the eyes of Europe on you. Here's wersal prosperity for you, repletion of animal food, golden fields, gladsome homesteads, and rounds of applause from r own hearts, all in one lot, and that's myself. Will you me as I stand? You won't? Well, then, I'll tell you t I'll do with you. Come now! I'll throw you in any-g you ask for. There! Church rates, abolition of church s, more malt tax, no malt tax, uniwersal education to the est mark, or uniwersal ignorance to the lowest, total aboli- of flogging in the army, or a dozen for every private once onth all round, Wrongs of Men or Rights of Women — only which it shall be, take 'em or leave 'em, and I'm of your ion altogether, and the lot's your own on your own terms. re! You won't take it yet! Well, then, I'll tell you t I'll do with you. Come! You *are* such free and inde-dent woters, and I *am* so proud of you, — you *are* such a le and enlightened constituency, and I *am* so ambitious of honour and dignity of being your member, which is by far highest level to which the wings of the human mind can , — that I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'll throw in all the public-houses in your magnificent town for ing. Will that content you? It won't? You won't the lot yet? Well, then, before I put the horse in and and make the offer to the next most magnificent

town that can be discovered, I 'll tell you what I 'll do. Take the lot, and I 'll drop two thousand pound in the streets of your magnificent town for them to pick up that can. Not enough? Now look here. This is the very furthest that I 'm a going to. I 'll make it two thousand five hundred. And still you won't? Here, missis! Put the horse — no, stop half a moment, I should n't like to turn my back upon you neither for a trifle; I 'll make it two thousand seven hundred and fifty pound. There! Take the lot on your own terms, and I 'll count out two thousand seven hundred and fifty pound on the foot-board of the cart, to be dropped in the streets of your magnificent town for them to pick up that can. What do you say? Come now! You won't do better, and you may do worse. You take it? Hooray! Sold again, and got the seat!"

These Dear Jacks soap the people shameful, but we Cheap Jacks don't. We tell 'em the truth about themselves to their faces, and scorn to court 'em. As to wenturesomeness in the way of puffing up the lots, the Dear Jacks beat us hollow. It is considered, in the Cheap-Jack calling, that better patter can be made out of a gun than any article we put up from the cart, except a pair of spectacles. I often hold forth about a gun for a quarter of an hour, and feel as if I need never leave off. But when I tell 'em what the gun can do, and what the gun has brought down, I never go half so far as the Dear Jacks do when they make speeches in praise of *their* guns — their great guns that set 'em on to do it. Besides, I 'm in business for myself: I ain't sent down into the market-place to order, as they are. Besides, again, my guns don't know what I say in their laudation, and their guns do, and the whole concern of 'em have reason to be sick and ashamed all round. These are some of my arguments for declaring that the Cheap-Jack calling is treated ill in Great Britain, and for turning warm when I think of the other Jacks in question setting themselves up to pretend to look down upon it.

I courted my wife from the foot-board of the cart. I did indeed. She was a Suffolk young woman, and it was in Ipswich market-place, right opposite the corn-chandler's shop. I had noticed her up at a window last Saturday that was, appreciating highly. I had took to her, and I had said to myself, "If not already disposed of, I 'll have that lot." Next Saturday that

come, I pitched the cart on the same pitch, and I was in very high feather indeed, keeping 'em laughing the whole of the time, and getting off the goods briskly. At last I took out of my waistcoat pocket a small lot wrapped in soft paper, and I put it this way (looking up at the window where she was). "Now here, my blooming English maidens, is an article, the last article of the present evening's sale, which I offer to only you, the lovely Suffolk Dumplings biling over with beauty, and I won't take a bid of a thousand pounds for from any man alive. Now, what is it? Why, I 'll tell you what it is. It's made of fine gold, and it's not broke, though there's a hole in the middle of it, and it's stronger than any fetter that ever was forged, though it's smaller than any finger in my set of ten. Why ten? Because, when my parents made over my property to me, I tell you true, there was twelve sheets, twelve towels, twelve table-cloths, twelve knives, twelve forks, twelve table-spoons, and twelve teaspoons, but my set of fingers was two short of a dozen, and could never since be matched. Now what else is it? Come, I 'll tell you. It's a hoop of solid gold, wrapped in a silver curl-paper, that I myself took off the shining locks of the ever-beautiful old lady in Threadneedle Street, London city; I would n't tell you so if I had n't the paper to show, or you might n't believe it even of me. Now what else is it? It 's a man-trap and a handcuff, the parish stocks and a leg-lock, all in gold, and all in one. Now what else is it? It 's a wedding-ring. Now I 'll tell you what I 'm a going to do with it. I 'm not a going to offer this lot for money; but I mean to give it to the next of you beauties that laughs, and I 'll pay her a visit to-morrow morning at exactly half-after nine o'clock as the chimes go, and I 'll take her out for a walk to put up the banns." *She* laughed, and got the ring handed up to her. When I called in the morning, she says, "Oh, dear! It 's never you, and you never mean it?" "It 's ever me," says I, "and I am ever yours, and I ever mean it." So we got married, after being put up three times — which, by the bye, is quite in the Cheap-Jack way again, and shows once more how the Cheap-Jack customs pervade society.

She was n't a bad wife, but she had a temper. If she could have parted with that one article at a sacrifice, I would n't have swopped her away in exchange for any other woman in England. Not that I ever did swop her away, for we lived together till

she died, and that was thirteen year. Now, my lords and ladies and gentlefolks all, I'll let you into a secret, though you won't believe it. Thirteen year of temper in a Palace would try the worst of you, but thirteen year of temper in a Cart would try the best of you. You are kept so very close to it in a cart, you see. There's thousands of couples among you getting on like sweet ile upon a whetstone in houses five and six pairs of stairs high, that would go to the Divorce Court in a cart. Whether the jolting makes it worse, I don't undertake to decide; but in a cart it does come home to you, and stick to you. Wiolence in a cart is *so* wiolent, and aggrawation in a cart is *so* aggrawating.

We might have had such a pleasant life! A roomy cart, with the large goods hung outside, and the bed slung underneath it when on the road, an iron pot and a kettle, a fireplace for the cold weather, a chimney for the smoke, a hanging-shelf and a cupboard, a dog and a horse. What more do you want? You draw off upon a bit of turf in a green lane or by the roadside, you hobble your old horse and turn him grazing, you light your fire upon the ashes of the last visitors, you cook your stew, and you wouldn't call the Emperor of France your father. But have a temper in the cart, flinging language and the hardest goods in stock at you, and where are you then? Put a name to your feelings.

My dog knew as well when she was on the turn as I did. Before she broke out, he would give a howl, and bolt. How he knew it was a mystery to me; but the sure and certain knowledge of it would wake him up out of his soundest sleep, and he would give a howl, and bolt. At such times I wished I was him.

The worst of it was, we had a daughter born to us, and I love children with all my heart. When she was in her furies, she beat the child. This got to be so shocking, as the child got to be four or five year old, that I have many a time gone on with my whip over my shoulder, at the old horse's head, sobbing and crying worse than ever little Sophy did. For how could I prevent it? Such a thing is not to be tried with such a temper — in a cart — without coming to a fight. It's in the natural size and formation of a cart to bring it to a fight. And then the poor child got worse terrified than before, as well as worse hurt generally, and her mother made complaints to the

next people we lighted on, and the word went round, "Here 's a wretch of a Cheap Jack been a beating his wife."

Little Sophy was such a brave child! She grew to be quite devoted to her poor father, though he could do so little to help her. She had a wonderful quantity of shining dark hair, all curling natural about her. It is quite astonishing to me now, that I did n't go tearing mad when I used to see her run from her mother before the cart, and her mother catch her by this hair, and pull her down by it, and beat her.

Such a brave child I said she was! Ah! with reason.

"Don't you mind next time, father dear," she would whisper to me, with her little face still flushed, and her bright eyes still wet; "if I don't cry out, you may know I am not much hurt. And even if I do cry out, it will only be to get mother to let go and leave off." What I have seen the little spirit bear — for me — without crying out!

Yet in other respects her mother took great care of her. Her clothes were always clean and neat, and her mother was never tired of working at 'em. Such is the inconsistency in things. Our being down in the marsh country in unhealthy weather, I consider the cause of Sophy's taking bad low fever; but, however she took it, once she got it she turned away from her mother for evermore, and nothing would persuade her to be touched by her mother's hand. She would shiver and say, "No, no, no," when it was offered at, and would hide her face on my shoulder, and hold me tighter round the neck.

The Cheap-Jack business had been worse than ever I had known it, what with one thing and what with another (and not least with railroads, which will cut it all to pieces, I expect, at last), and I was run dry of money. For which reason, one night at that period of little Sophy's being so bad, either we must have come to a dead-lock for victuals and drink, or I must have pitched the cart as I did.

I could n't get the dear child to lie down or leave go of me, and indeed I had n't the heart to try, so I stepped out on the foot-board with her holding round my neck. They all set up a laugh when they see us, and one chuckle-headed Joskin (that I hated for it) made the bidding, "Tuppence for her!"

"Now, you country boobies," says I, feeling as if my heart was a heavy weight at the end of a broken sash-line, "I give you notice that I am a going to charm the money out of your

pockets, and to give you so much more than your money's worth that you'll only persuade yourselves to draw your Saturday night's wages over again arterwards by the hopes of meeting me to lay 'em out with, which you never will, and why not? Because I've made my fortune by selling my goods on a large scale for seventy-five per cent. less than I give for 'em, and I am consequently to be elevated to the House of Peers next week, by the title of the Duke of Cheap and Markis Jackaloorul. Now let's know what you want to-night, and you shall have it. But first of all, shall I tell you why I have got this little girl round my neck? You don't want to know? Then you shall. She belongs to the Fairies. She's a fortune-teller. She can tell me all about you in a whisper, and can put me up to whether you're a going to buy a lot or leave it. Now do you want a saw? No, she says you don't, because you're too clumsy to use one. Else here's a saw which would be a life-long blessing to a handy man, at four shillings, at three-and-six, at three, at two-and-six, at two, at eighteenpence. But none of you shall have it at any price, on account of your well-known awkwardness, which would make it manslaughter. The same objection applies to this set of three planes, which I won't let you have neither, so don't bid for 'em. Now I am a going to ask her what you do want." (Then I whispered, "Your head burns so, that I am afraid it hurts you bad, my pet," and she answered, without opening her heavy eyes, "Just a little, father.") "Oh! This little fortune-teller says it's a memorandum book you want. Then why didn't you mention it? Here it is. Look at it. Two hundred superfine, hot-pressed, wire-wove pages — if you don't believe me, count 'em — ready ruled for your expenses, an everlastingly pointed pencil to put 'em down with, a double-bladed penknife to scratch 'em out with, a book of printed tables to calculate your income with, and a camp-stool to sit down upon while you give your mind to it! Stop! And an umbrella to keep the moon off when you give your mind to it on a pitch-dark night. Now I won't ask you how much for the lot, but how little? How little are you thinking of? Don't be ashamed to mention it, because my fortune-teller knows already." (Then, making believe to whisper, I kissed her, and she kissed me.) "Why, she says you are thinking of as little as three-and-threepence! I couldn't have believed it, even of you, unless she told me. Three-and-

threepence! And a set of printed tables in the lot that'll calculate your income up to forty thousand a year! With an income of forty thousand a year, you grudge three-and-sixpence. Well, then, I'll tell you my opinion. I so despise the threepence, that I'd sooner take three shillings. There. For three shillings, three shillings, three shillings! Gone! Hand 'em over to the lucky man."

As there had been no bid at all, everybody looked about and grinned at everybody, while I touched little Sophy's face and asked her if she felt faint or giddy. "Not very, father. It will soon be over." Then, turning from the pretty patient eyes, which were opened now, and seeing nothing but grins across my lighted grease-pot, I went on again in my Cheap-Jack style. "Where's the butcher?" (My sorrowful eye had just caught sight of a fat young butcher on the outside of the crowd.) "She says the good luck is the butcher's. Where is he?" Everybody handed on the blushing butcher to the front, and there was a roar, and the butcher felt himself obliged to put his hand in his pocket, and take the lot. The party so picked out, in general, does feel obliged to take the lot — good four times out of six. Then we had another lot, the counterpart of that one, and sold it sixpence cheaper, which is always wery much enjoyed. Then we had the spectacles. It ain't a special profitable lot, but I put 'em on, and I see what the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to take off the taxes, and I see what the sweetheart of the young woman in the shawl is doing at home, and I see what the Bishops has got for dinner, and a deal more that seldom fails to fetch 'em up in their spirits; and the better their spirits, the better their bids. Then we had the ladies' lot, — the teapot, tea-caddy, glass sugar-basin, half a dozen spoons, and caudle-cup, — and all the time I was making similar excuses to give a look or two and say a word or two to my poor child. It was while the second ladies' lot was holding 'em enchained that I felt her lift herself a little on my shoulder, to look across the dark street. "What troubles you, darling?" "Nothing troubles me, father. I am not at all troubled. But don't I see a pretty churchyard over there?" "Yes, my dear." "Kiss me twice, dear father, and lay me down to rest upon that churchyard grass so soft and green." I staggered back into the cart with her head dropped on my shoulder, and I says to her mother, "Quick! Shut the door! Don't let those laughing people

see!" "What's the matter?" she cries. [illegible] woman," I tells her, "you'll never catch my [illegible] her hair again, for she has flown away from you.'"

Maybe those were harder words than I meant [illegible] that from that time forth my wife took to brooding, and [illegible] cart, or walk beside the horse at a stretch, with [illegible] and her eyes looking on the ground. When her [illegible] which was rather oftener than before, they [illegible] new way, and [illegible] herself about to that [illegible] was [illegible]. She [illegible] the [illegible] and through some years I [illegible] the old horse's head, which [illegible] that [illegible] King [illegible]

[illegible]

general rule is, going round the country, to draw the line at dressing up. When a man can't trust his getting a living to his undisguised abilities, you consider him below your sort. And this giant, when on view, figured as a Roman.

He was a languid young man, which I attribute to the distance betwixt his extremities. He had a little head, and less in it; he had weak eyes and weak knees; and altogether you could n't look at him without feeling that there was greatly too much of him, both for his joints and his mind. But he was an amiable though timid young man (his mother let him out, and spent the money), and we come acquainted when he was walking to ease the horse betwixt two fairs. He was called Rinaldo di Velasco, his name being Pickleson.

This giant, otherwise Pickleson, mentioned to me, under the seal of confidence, that, beyond his being a burden to himself, his life was made a burden to him by the cruelty of his master towards a step-daughter who was deaf and dumb. Her mother was dead, and she had no living soul to take her part, and was used most hard. She travelled with his master's caravan only because there was nowhere to leave her, and this giant, otherwise Pickleson, did go so far as to believe that his master often tried to lose her. He was such a very languid young man, that I don't know how long it did n't take him to get his story out, but it passed through his defective circulation to his top extremity in course of time.

When I heard this account from the giant, otherwise Pickleson, and likewise that the poor girl had beautiful long dark hair, and was often pulled down by it and beaten, I could n't see the giant through what stood in my eyes. Having wiped 'em, I give him sixpence (for he was kept as short as he was long), and he laid it out in two three-penn'orths of gin and water, which so brisked him up, that he sang the Favourite Comic of Shivery Shakey, ain't it cold? — a popular effect which his master had tried every other means to get out of him as a Roman wholly in vain.

His master's name was Mim, a wery hoarse man, and I knew him to speak to. I went to that Fair as a mere civilian, leaving the cart outside the town, and I looked about the back of the Vans while the performing was going on, and at last, sitting dozing against a muddy cart-wheel, I came upon the poor girl who was deaf and dumb. At the first look I might almost

have judged that she had escaped from the Wild Beast Show; but at the second I thought better of her, and thought that if she was more cared for, and more kindly used, she would be like my child. She was just the same age that my own daughter would have been if her pretty head had not fell down upon my shoulder that unfortunate night.

To cut it short, I spoke confidential to Mim while he was beating the gong outside betwixt two lots of Pickleson's publics, and I put it to him, "She lies heavy on your own hands; what'll you take for her?" Mim was a most ferocious swearer. Suppressing that part of his reply which was much the longest part, his reply was, "A pair of braces." "Now, I'll tell you," says I, "what I'm a going to do with you. I'm a going to fetch you half a dozen pair of the primest braces in the cart, and then to take her away with me." Says Mim (again ferocious), "I'll believe it when I've got the goods and no sooner." I made all the haste I could, lest he should think twice of it, and the bargain was completed, which Pickleson he was thereby so relieved in his mind that he come out at his little back door, long-ways like a serpent, and give us Shivery Shakey in a whisper among the wheels at parting.

It was happy days for both of us when Sophy and me began to travel in the cart. I at once give her the name of Sophy, to put her ever towards me in the attitude of my own daughter. We soon made out to begin to understand one another, through the goodness of the Heavens, when she knowed that I meant true and kind by her. In a very little time she was wonderful fond of me. You have no idea what it is to have anybody wonderful fond of you, unless you have been got down and rolled upon by the lonely feelings that I have mentioned as having once got the better of me.

You'd have laughed — or the rewerse — it's according to your disposition — if you could have seen me trying to teach Sophy. At first I was helped — you'd never guess by what — milestones. I got some large alphabets in a box, all the letters separate on bits of bone, and saying we was going to WINDSOR, I give her those letters in that order, and then at every milestone I showed her those same letters in that same order again, and pointed towards the abode of royalty. Another time I give her CART, and then chalked the same upon the cart. Another time I give her DOCTOR MARIGOLD, and hung a corresponding

inscription outside my waistcoat. People that met us might stare a bit and laugh; but what did *I* care, if she caught the idea? She caught it after long patience and trouble, and then we did begin to get on swimmingly, I believe you! At first she was a little given to consider me the cart, and the cart the abode of royalty, but that soon wore off.

We had our signs, too, and they was hundreds in number. Sometimes she would sit looking at me, and considering hard how to communicate with me about something fresh, — how to ask me what she wanted explained, — and then she was (or I thought she was; what does it signify?) so like my child with those years added to her, that I half believed it was herself, trying to tell me where she had been to up in the skies, and what she had seen since that unhappy night when she flied away. She had a pretty face, and now that there was no one to drag at her bright dark hair, and it was all in order, there was a something touching in her looks that made the cart most peaceful and most quiet, though not at all melancholy. [N. B. In the Cheap-Jack patter, we generally sound it lemonjolly, and it gets a laugh.]

The way she learnt to understand any look of mine was truly surprising. When I sold of a night, she would sit in the cart unseen by them outside, and would give a eager look into my eyes when I looked in, and would hand me straight the precise article or articles I wanted. And then she would clap her hands, and laugh for joy. And as for me, seeing her so bright, and remembering what she was when I first lighted on her, starved and beaten and ragged, leaning asleep against the muddy cart-wheel, it give me such heart that I gained a greater heighth of reputation than ever, and I put Pickleson down (by the name of Mim's Travelling Giant, otherwise Pickleson) for a fypunnote in my will.

This happiness went on in the cart till she was sixteen year old. By which time I began to feel not satisfied that I had done my whole duty by her, and to consider that she ought to have better teaching than I could give her. It drew a many tears on both sides when I commenced explaining my views to her; but what's right is right, and you can't neither by tears nor laughter do away with its character.

So I took her hand in mine, and I went with her one day to the Deaf and Dumb Establishment in London, and when the

hold, a new scheme come into my head, which, as it turned out, kept my time and attention a good deal employed, and helped me over the two years' stile.

Without being of an avaricious temper, I like to be the owner of things. I should n't wish, for instance, to go partners with yourself in the Cheap-Jack cart. It 's not that I mistrust you, but that I 'd rather know it was mine. Similarly, very likely you 'd rather know it was yours. Well! A kind of a jealousy began to creep into my mind when I reflected that all those books would have been read by other people long before they was read by her. It seemed to take away from her being the owner of 'em like. In this way, the question got into my head: Could n't I have a book new-made express for her, which she should be the first to read?

It pleased me, that thought did; and as I never was a man to let a thought sleep (you must wake up all the whole family of thoughts you 've got, and burn their nightcaps, or you won't do in the Cheap-Jack line), I set to work at it. Considering that I was in the habit of changing so much about the country, and that I should have to find out a literary character here to make a deal with, and another literary character there to make a deal with, as opportunities presented, I hit on the plan that this same book should be a general miscellaneous lot, — like the razors, flat-iron, chronometer watch, dinner plates, rolling-pin, and looking-glass, — and should n't be offered as a single indiwidual article, like the spectacles or the gun. When I had come to that conclusion, I come to another, which shall likewise be yours.

Often had I regretted that she never had heard me on the foot-board, and that she never could hear me. It ain't that *I* am vain, but that *you* don't like to put your own light under a bushel. What 's the worth of your reputation, if you can't convey the reason for it to the person you most wish to value it? Now I 'll put it to you. Is it worth sixpence, fippence, fourpence, threepence, twopence, a penny, a halfpenny, a farthing? No, it ain't. Not worth a farthing. Very well, then. My conclusion was that I would begin her book with some account of myself. So that, through reading a specimen or two of me on the foot-board, she might form an idea of my merits there. I was aware that I could n't do myself justice. A man can't write his eye (at least, *I* don't know how to), nor yet can a man

"In the cart, sir, but only in the cart. She will live a private life, you understand, in the cart. I should never think of bringing her infirmities before the public. I would n't make a show of her for any money."

The gentleman nodded, and seemed to approve.

"Well," says he, "can you part with her for two years?"

"To do her that good, — yes, sir."

"There's another question," says the gentleman, looking towards her. "Can she part with you for two years?"

I don't know that it was a harder matter of itself (for the other was hard enough to me), but it was harder to get over. However, she was pacified to it at last, and the separation betwixt us was settled. How it cut up both of us when it took place, and when I left her at the door in the dark of an evening, I don't tell. But I know this; remembering that night, I shall never pass that same establishment without a heartache and a swelling in the throat, and I could n't put you up the best of lots in sight of it with my usual spirit, — no, not even the gun, nor the pair of spectacles, — for five hundred pound reward from the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and throw in the honour of putting my legs under his mahogany arterwards.

Still the loneliness that followed in the cart was not the old loneliness, because there was a term put to it, however long to look forward to; and because I could think, when I was anyways down, that she belonged to me and I belonged to her. Always planning for her coming back, I bought in a few months' time another cart; and what do you think I planned to do with it? I'll tell you. I planned to fit it up with shelves and books for her reading, and to have a seat in it where I could sit and see her read, and think that I had been her first teacher. Not hurrying over the job, I had the fittings knocked together in contriving ways under my own inspection, and here was her bed in a berth with curtains, and there was her reading-table, and here was her writing-desk, and elsewhere was her books in rows upon rows, picters and no picters, bindings and no bindings, gilt-edged and plain, just as I could pick 'em up for her in lots up and down the country, North and South and West and East, Winds liked best and winds liked least, Here and there and gone astray, Over the hills and far away. And when I had got together pretty well as many books as the cart would neatly

it, nor the patience over it. Which again is like the foot-board. The public have no idea.

At last it was done, and the two years' time was gone after all the other time before it, and where it's all gone to, who knows? The new cart was finished, — yellow outside, relieved with wermilion and brass fittings, — the old horse was put in it, a new 'un and a boy being laid on for the Cheap-Jack cart, — and I cleaned myself up to go and fetch her. Bright cold weather it was, cart-chimneys smoking, carts pitched private on a piece of waste ground over at Wandsworth, where you may see 'em from the Sou'western Railway when not upon the road. (Look out of the right-hand window going down.)

"Marigold," says the gentleman, giving his hand hearty, "I am very glad to see you."

"Yet I have my doubts, sir," says I, "if you can be half as glad to see me as I am to see you."

"The time has appeared so long, — has it, Marigold?"

"I won't say that, sir, considering its real length; but —"

"What a start, my good fellow!"

Ah! I should think it was! Grown such a woman, so pretty, so intelligent, so expressive! I knew then that she must be really like my child, or I could never have known her, standing quiet by the door.

"You are affected," says the gentleman in a kindly manner.

"I feel, sir," says I, "that I am but a rough chap in a sleeved waistcoat."

"I feel," says the gentleman, "that it was you who raised her from misery and degradation, and brought her into communication with her kind. But why do we converse alone together, when we can converse so well with her? Address her in your own way."

"I am such a rough chap in a sleeved waistcoat, sir," says I, "and she is such a graceful woman, and she stands so quiet at the door!"

"Try if she moves at the old sign," says the gentleman.

They had got it up together o' purpose to please me! For when I give her the old sign, she rushed to my feet, and dropped upon her knees, holding up her hands to me with pouring tears of love and joy; and when I took her hands and lifted her, she clasped me round the neck, and lay there; and I don't know what a fool I didn't make of myself, until we all three

settled down into talking without sound, as if there was a something soft and pleasant spread over the whole world for us.[1]

So every item of my plan was crowned with success. Our reunited life was more than all that we had looked forward to. Content and joy went with us as the wheels of the two carts went round, and the same stopped with us when the two carts stopped. I was as pleased and as proud as a Pug-Dog with his muzzle black-leaded for a evening party, and his tail extra curled by machinery.

But I had left something out of my calculations. Now, what had I left out? To help you to a guess, I'll say, a figure. Come. Make a guess, and guess right. Nought? No. Nine? No. Eight? No. Seven? No. Six? No. Five? No. Four? No. Three? No. Two? No. One? No. Now I'll tell you what I'll do with you. I'll say it's another sort of figure altogether. There. Why then, says you, it's a mortal figure. No, nor yet a mortal figure. By such means you get yourself penned into a corner, and you can't help guessing a immortal figure. That's about it. Why did n't you say so sooner?

Yes. It was a immortal figure that I had altogether left out of my calculations. Neither man's nor woman's, but a child's.

[1] [A portion is here omitted from the text, having reference to the sketches contributed by other writers; but the reader will be pleased to have what follows retained in a note.

"Now I'll tell you what I am a going to do with you. I am a going to offer you the general miscellaneous lot, her own book, never read by anybody else but me, added to and completed by me after her first reading of it, eight-and-forty printed pages, six-and-ninety columns, Whiting's own work, Beaufort House to wit, thrown off by the steam-ingine, best of paper, beautiful green wrapper, folded like clean linen come home from the clear-starcher's, and so exquisitely stitched that, regarded as a piece of needlework alone, it's better than the sampler of a seamstress undergoing a Competitive Examination for Starvation before the Civil Service Commissioners — and I offer the lot for what? For eight pound? Not so much. For six pound? Less. For four pound? Why, I hardly expect you to believe me, but that's the sum. Four pound! The stitching alone cost half as much again. Here's forty-eight original pages, ninety-six original columns, for four pound. You want more for the money? Take it. Three whole pages of advertisements of thrilling interest thrown in for nothing. Read 'em and believe 'em. More? My best of wishes for your merry Christmases and your happy New Years, your long lives and your true prosperities. Worth twenty pound good if they are delivered as I send them. Remember! Here's a final prescription added, "To be taken for life," which will tell you how the cart broke down, and where the journey ended. You think Four Pound too much? And still you think so? Come! I'll tell you what, then. Say Four Pence, and keep the secret!"]

Girl's, or boy's? Boy's. "I, says the sparrow, [illegible] and arrow." Now you have got it.

We were down at Lancaster, and I had done [illegible] than fair average business (though I cannot in [illegible] mend them as a quick audience) in the open [illegible] the end of the street where Mr. Sly's King's [illegible] Hotel stands. Mim's travelling giant, oth[illegible] happened at the self-same time to be a trying [illegible] The genteel lay was adopted with him. No [illegible] Green baize alcove leading up to Pickleson in a [illegible] Printed poster, "Free-list suspended, with the [illegible] proud boast of an enlightened country, a free [illegible] admitted by private arrangement. Nothing [illegible] the cheek of youth, or shock the most fastidious [illegible] ing most horrible and terrific, in a pink calico [illegible] slackness of the public. Serious handbill in the [illegible] that it was all but impossible to come to a correct [illegible] of the history of David without seeing Pickleson [illegible]

I went to the Auction Room in question [illegible] entirely empty of everything but echoes and [illegible] the single exception of Pickleson on a p[illegible] This suited my purpose, as I wanted a private [illegible] word with him, which was: "Pickleson, [illegible] ness to you, I put you in my will for a fy[illegible] trouble, here's four pun ten down, which [illegible] views, and let us so conclude the transaction [illegible] up to that remark had had the dejected [illegible] Roman rushlight that could n't anyhow [illegible] up at his top extremity, and made his [illegible] way which (for him) was parliamentary el[illegible] did add that, having ceased to draw [illegible] made proposals for his going in as a co[illegible] worked upon by The Dairyman's Daughter [illegible] having no acquaintance with the tract [illegible] woman, and not being willing to couple [illegible] views, he had declined to do, thereby leading [illegible] total stoppage of the unfortunate young [illegible] [illegible] during the whole of the interview, [illegible] [illegible] Mim down below [illegible] a leaf.

I [illegible] was to the passage [illegible]

...ribe for that headache."
...Prescriptions, and held it up
...me keep still and look earnest,
...her eyes were very attentive.
...Sophy."

...n, and I put her hand in his,
...of them were these: "Doc-
To be taken for life." After

I mounted a coat (blue, and
last time in all my days, and
hand. There were only us
had charge of her for those
dinner of four in the Library
...d pork, a pair of fowls, and
...t of drinks. I give them a
...s a speech, and all our jokes
a sky-rocket. In the course
to Sophy that I should keep
when not upon the road, and
...r her just as they stood, till
she went to China with her
...ng sorrowful and heavy, and
...; and so as of old, when my
plodding along alone, with
old horse's head.
...nd I wrote her many letters.
...e sent me one in an unsteady
...k ago I had a darling little
...ey let me write these words
I hope my child may not be
now." When I wrote back,
...hy never answered that ques-
I never repeated it. For a
but then they got irregular.
...oved to another station, and

Girl's, or boy's?" "Boy's." "'I,' says the sparrow, with my bow and arrow." Now you have got it.

We were down at Lancaster, and I had done two nights more than fair average business (though I cannot in honour recommend them as a quick audience) in the open square there, near the end of the street where Mr. Sly's King's Arms and Royal Hotel stands. Mim's travelling giant, otherwise Pickleson, happened at the self-same time to be a trying it on in the town. The genteel lay was adopted with him. No hint of a van. Green baize alcove leading up to Pickleson in a Auction Room. Printed poster, "Free list suspended, with the exception of that proud boast of an enlightened country, a free press. Schools admitted by private arrangement. Nothing to raise a blush in the cheek of youth or shock the most fastidious." Mim swearing most horrible and terrific, in a pink calico pay-place, at the slackness of the public. Serious handbill in the shops, importing that it was all but impossible to come to a right understanding of the history of David without seeing Pickleson.

[illegible]

travelling giant, otherwise Pickleson, was this: "Doctor Marigold," — I give his words without a hope of conweying their feebleness, — "who is the strange young man that hangs about your carts?" — "The strange young *man?*" I gives him back, thinking that he meant her, and his languid circulation had dropped a syllable. "Doctor," he returns with a pathos calculated to draw a tear from even a manly eye, "I am weak, but not so weak yet as that I don't know my words. I repeat them, Doctor. The strange young man." It then appeared that Pickleson, being forced to stretch his legs (not that they wanted it) only at times when he could n't be seen for nothing, to wit, in the dead of the night and towards daybreak, had twice seen hanging about my carts, in that same town of Lancaster where I had been only two nights, this same unknown young man.

It put me rather out of sorts. What it meant as to particulars I no more foreboded then than you forebode now, but it put me rather out of sorts. Howsoever, I made light of it to Pickleson, and I took leave of Pickleson, advising him to spend his legacy in getting up his stamina, and to continue to stand by his religion. Towards morning I kept a look-out for the strange young man, and — what was more — I saw the strange young man. He was well dressed and well looking. He loitered very nigh my carts, watching them like as if he was taking care of them, and soon after daybreak turned and went away. I sent a hail after him, but he never started or looked round, or took the smallest notice.

We left Lancaster within an hour or two, on our way towards Carlisle. Next morning, at daybreak, I looked out again for the strange young man. I did not see him. But next morning I looked out again, and there he was once more. I sent another hail after him, but, as before, he gave not the slightest sign of being anyways disturbed. This put a thought into my head. Acting on it, I watched him in different manners and at different times not necessary to enter into, till I found that this strange young man was deaf and dumb.

The discovery turned me over, because I knew that a part of that establishment where she had been was allotted to young men (some of them well off), and I thought to myself, "If she favours him, where am I? and where is all that I have worked and planned for?" Hoping — I must confess to the selfish-

ness — that she might *not* favour him, I set myself to find out. At last I was by accident present at a meeting between them in the open air, looking on leaning behind a fir-tree without their knowing of it. It was a moving meeting for all the three parties concerned. I knew every syllable that passed between them as well as they did. I listened with my eyes, which had come to be as quick and true with deaf and dumb conversation as my ears with the talk of people that can speak. He was a going out to China as clerk in a merchant house, which his father had been before him. He was in circumstances to keep a wife, and he wanted her to marry him and go along with him. She persisted, no. He asked if she did n't love him. Yes, she loved him dearly, dearly; but she could never disappoint her beloved, good, noble, generous, and I-don't-know-what-all father (meaning me, the Cheap Jack in the sleeved waistcoat), and she would stay with him, Heaven bless him! though it was to break her heart. Then she cried most bitterly, and that made up my mind.

While my mind had been in an unsettled state about her favouring this young man, I had felt that unreasonable towards Pickleson that it was well for him he had got his legacy down. For I often thought, "If it had n't been for this same weak-minded giant, I might never have come to trouble my head and wex my soul about the young man." But once that I knew she loved him, — once that I had seen her weep for him, — it was a different thing. I made it right in my mind with Pickleson on the spot, and I shook myself together to do what was right by all.

She had left the young man by that time (for it took a few minutes to get me thoroughly well shook together), and the young man was leaning against another of the fir-trees, — of which there was a cluster, — with his face upon his arm. I touched him on the back. Looking up and seeing me, he says, in our deaf and dumb talk, "Do not be angry."

"I am not angry, good boy. I am your friend. Come with me."

I left him at the foot of the steps of the Library Cart, and I went up alone. She was drying her eyes.

"You have been crying, my dear."

"Yes, father."

"Why?"

"A headache."

"Not a heartache?"

"I said a headache, father."

"Doctor Marigold must prescribe for that headache."

She took up the book of my Prescriptions, and held it up with a forced smile; but seeing me keep still and look earnest, she softly laid it down again, and her eyes were very attentive.

"The Prescription is not there, Sophy."

"Where is it?"

"Here, my dear."

I brought her young husband in, and I put her hand in his, and my only farther words to both of them were these: "Doctor Marigold's last Prescription. To be taken for life." After which I bolted.

When the wedding come off, I mounted a coat (blue, and bright buttons), for the first and last time in all my days, and I give Sophy away with my own hand. There were only us three and the gentleman who had had charge of her for those two years. I give the wedding dinner of four in the Library Cart. Pigeon-pie, a leg of pickled pork, a pair of fowls, and suitable garden stuff. The best of drinks. I give them a speech, and the gentleman give us a speech, and all our jokes told, and the whole went off like a sky-rocket. In the course of the entertainment I explained to Sophy that I should keep the Library Cart as my living-cart when not upon the road, and that I should keep all her books for her just as they stood, till she come back to claim them. So she went to China with her young husband, and it was a parting sorrowful and heavy, and I got the boy I had another service; and so as of old, when my child and wife were gone, I went plodding along alone, with my whip over my shoulder, at the old horse's head.

Sophy wrote me many letters, and I wrote her many letters. About the end of the first year she sent me one in an unsteady hand: "Dearest father, not a week ago I had a darling little daughter, but I am so well that they let me write these words to you. Dearest and best father, I hope my child may not be deaf and dumb, but I do not yet know." When I wrote back, I hinted the question; but as Sophy never answered that question, I felt it to be a sad one, and I never repeated it. For a long time our letters were regular, but then they got irregular, through Sophy's husband being moved to another station, and

through my being always on the move. But we were in one another's thoughts, I was equally sure, letters or no letters.

Five years, odd months, had gone since Sophy went away. I was still the King of the Cheap Jacks, and at a greater height of popularity than ever. I had had a first-rate autumn of it, and on the twenty-third of December, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four, I found myself at Uxbridge, Middlesex, clean sold out. So I jogged up to London with the old horse, light and easy, to have my Christmas Eve and Christmas Day alone by the fire in the Library Cart, and then to buy a regular new stock of goods all round, to sell 'em again and get the money.

I am a neat hand at cookery, and I 'll tell you what I knocked up for my Christmas Eve dinner in the Library Cart. I knocked up a beef-steak pudding for one, with two kidneys, a dozen oysters, and a couple of mushrooms thrown in. It's a pudding to put a man in good humour with everything, except the two bottom buttons of his waistcoat. Having relished that pudding and cleared away, I turned the lamp low, and sat down by the light of the fire, watching it as it shone upon the backs of Sophy's books.

Sophy's books so brought up Sophy's self that I saw her touching face quite plainly, before I dropped off dozing by the fire. This may be a reason why Sophy, with her deaf and dumb child in her arms, seemed to stand silent by me all through my nap. I was on the road, off the road, in all sorts of places, North and South, and West and East, Winds liked best and winds liked least, Here and there and gone astray, Over the hills and far away, and still she stood silent by me, with her silent child in her arms. Even when I woke with a start, she seemed to vanish, as if she had stood by me in that very place only a single instant before.

I had started at a real sound, and the sound was on the steps of the cart. It was the light, hurried tread of a child, coming clambering up. That tread of a child had once been so familiar to me that for half a moment I believed I was a going to see a little ghost.

But the touch of a real child was laid upon the outer handle of the door, and the handle turned, and the door opened a little way, and a real child peeped in. A bright little comely girl with large dark eyes.

Looking full at me, the tiny creature took off her mite of a straw hat, and a quantity of dark curls fell all about her face. Then she opened her lips, and said in a pretty voice: —

"Grandfather!"

"Ah, my God!" I cries out. "She can speak!"

"Yes, dear grandfather. And I am to ask you whether there was ever any one that I remind you of?"

In a moment Sophy was round my neck, as well as the child, and her husband was a ringing my hand with his face hid, and we all had to shake ourselves together before we could get over it. And when we did begin to get over it, and I saw the pretty child a talking, pleased and quick and eager and busy, to her mother, in the signs that I had first taught her mother, the happy and yet pitying tears fell rolling down my face.

TWO GHOST STORIES

I

THE TRIAL FOR MURDER [1]

I HAVE always noticed a prevalent want of courage, even among persons of superior intelligence and culture, as to imparting their own psychological experiences when those have been of a strange sort. Almost all men are afraid that what they could relate in such wise would find no parallel or response in a listener's internal life, and might be suspected or laughed at. A truthful traveller, who should have seen some extraordinary creature in the likeness of a sea-serpent, would have no fear of mentioning it; but the same traveller, having had some singular presentiment, impulse, vagary of thought, vision (so called), dream, or other remarkable mental impression, would hesitate considerably before he would own to it. To this reticence I attribute much of the obscurity in which such subjects are involved. We do not habitually communicate our experiences of these subjective things as we do our experiences of objective creation. The consequence is that the general stock of experience in this regard appears exceptional, and really is so, in respect of being miserably imperfect.

In what I am going to relate, I have no intention of setting up, opposing, or supporting any theory whatever. I know the history of the Bookseller of Berlin, I have studied the case of the wife of a late Astronomer Royal as related by Sir David Brewster, and I have followed the minutest details of a much more remarkable case of Spectral Illusion occurring within my private circle of friends. It may be necessary to state, as to this last, that the sufferer (a lady) was in no degree, however distant, related to me. A mistaken assumption on that head might suggest an explanation of a part of my own case, — but

[1] This paper appeared as a chapter "To be taken with a Grain of Salt," in *Doctor Marigold's Prescription.*

only a part, — which would be wholly without foundation. It cannot be referred to my inheritance of any developed peculiarity, nor had I ever before any at all similar experience, nor have I ever had any at all similar experience since.

It does not signify how many years ago, or how few, a certain murder was committed in England, which attracted great attention. We hear of more than enough of murderers as they rise in succession to their atrocious eminence, and I would bury the memory of this particular brute, if I could, as his body was buried, in Newgate Jail. I purposely abstain from giving any direct clue to the criminal's individuality.

When the murder was first discovered, no suspicion fell — or I ought rather to say, for I cannot be too precise in my facts, it was nowhere publicly hinted that any suspicion fell — on the man who was afterwards brought to trial. As no reference was at that time made to him in the newspapers, it is obviously impossible that any description of him can at that time have been given in the newspapers. It is essential that this fact be remembered.

Unfolding at breakfast my morning paper, containing the account of that first discovery, I found it to be deeply interesting, and I read it with close attention. I read it twice, if not three times. The discovery had been made in a bedroom, and, when I laid down the paper, I was aware of a flash — rush — flow — I do not know what to call it, — no word I can find is satisfactorily descriptive, — in which I seemed to see that bedroom passing through my room, like a picture impossibly painted on a running river. Though almost instantaneous in its passing, it was perfectly clear; so clear that I distinctly, and with a sense of relief, observed the absence of the dead body from the bed.

It was in no romantic place that I had this curious sensation, but in chambers in Piccadilly, very near to the corner of St. James's Street. It was entirely new to me. I was in my easy-chair at the moment, and the sensation was accompanied with a peculiar shiver which started the chair from its position. (But it is to be noted that the chair ran easily on casters.) I went to one of the windows (there are two in the room, and the room is on the second floor) to refresh my eyes with the moving objects down in Piccadilly. It was a bright autumn morning, and the street was sparkling and cheerful. The wind was high.

that face before, except on the one occasion in Piccadilly. Comparing its expression when beckoning at the door with its expression when it had stared up at me as I stood at my window, I came to the conclusion that on the first occasion it had sought to fasten itself upon my memory, and that on the second occasion it had made sure of being immediately remembered.

I was not very comfortable that night, though I felt a certainty, difficult to explain, that the figure would not return. At daylight I fell into a heavy sleep, from which I was awakened by John Derrick's coming to my bedside with a paper in his hand.

This paper, it appeared, had been the subject of an altercation at the door between its bearer and my servant. It was a summons to me to serve upon a Jury at the forthcoming Sessions of the Central Criminal Court at the Old Bailey. I had never before been summoned on such a Jury, as John Derrick well knew. He believed — I am not certain at this hour whether with reason or otherwise — that that class of Jurors were customarily chosen on a lower qualification than mine, and he had at first refused to accept the summons. The man who served it had taken the matter very coolly. He had said that my attendance or non-attendance was nothing to him; there the summons was; and I should deal with it at my own peril, and not at his.

For a day or two I was undecided whether to respond to this call, or take no notice of it. I was not conscious of the slightest mysterious bias, influence, or attraction, one way or other. Of that I am as strictly sure as of every other statement that I make here. Ultimately I decided, as a break in the monotony of my life, that I would go.

The appointed morning was a raw morning in the month of November. There was a dense brown fog in Piccadilly, and it became positively black and in the last degree oppressive East of Temple Bar. I found the passages and staircases of the Courthouse flaringly lighted with gas, and the Court itself similarly illuminated. I *think* that, until I was conducted by officers into the Old Court and saw its crowded state, I did not know that the Murderer was to be tried that day. I think that, until I was so helped into the Old Court with considerable difficulty, I did not know into which of the two Courts sitting

of general prejudice and want of time for the preparation of the defence. I may further have known, but I believe I did not, when, or about when, the Sessions to which his trial stood postponed would come on.

My sitting-room, bedroom, and dressing-room are all on one floor. With the last there is no communication but through the bedroom. True, there is a door in it, once communicating with the staircase; but a part of the fitting of my bath has been — and had then been for some years — fixed across it. At the same period, and as a part of the same arrangement, the door has been nailed up and canvassed over.

I was standing in my bedroom late one night, giving some directions to my servant before he went to bed. My face was towards the only available door of communication with the dressing-room, and it was closed. My servant's back was towards that door. While I was speaking to him, I saw it open, and a man look in, who very earnestly and mysteriously beckoned to me. That man was the man who had gone second of the two along Piccadilly, and whose face was of the colour of impure wax.

The figure, having beckoned, drew back, and closed the door. With no longer pause than was made by my crossing the bedroom, I opened the dressing-room door, and looked in. I had a lighted candle already in my hand. I felt no inward expectation of seeing the figure in the dressing-room, and I did not see it there.

Conscious that my servant stood amazed, I turned round to him, and said: "Derrick, could you believe that in my cool senses I fancied I saw a — " As I there laid my hand upon his breast, with a sudden start he trembled violently, and said, "O Lord, yes, sir! A dead man beckoning."

Now, I do not believe that this John Derrick, my trusty and attached servant for more than twenty years, had any impression whatever of having seen any such figure until I touched him. The change in him was so startling when I touched him that I fully believe he derived his impression in some occult manner from me at that instant.

I bade John Derrick bring some brandy, and I gave him a dram, and was glad to take one myself. Of what had preceded that night's phenomenon, I told him not a single word. Reflecting on it, I was absolutely certain that I had never seen

heard the church clocks strike), happening to cast my eyes over my brother jurymen, I found an inexplicable difficulty in counting them. I counted them several times, yet always with the same difficulty. In short, I made them one too many.

I touched the brother juryman whose place was next me, and I whispered to him, "Oblige me by counting us." He looked surprised by the request, but turned his head and counted. "Why," says he suddenly, "we are Thirt—; but no, it's not possible. No. We are twelve."

According to my counting that day, we were always right in detail, but in the gross we were always one too many. There was no appearance — no figure — to account for it; but I had now an inward foreshadowing of the figure that was surely coming.

The Jury were housed at the London Tavern. We all slept in one large room on separate tables, and we were constantly in the charge and under the eye of the officer sworn to hold us in safe keeping. I see no reason for suppressing the real name of that officer. He was intelligent, highly polite, and obliging, and (I was glad to hear) much respected in the City. He had an agreeable presence, good eyes, enviable black whiskers, and a fine sonorous voice. His name was Mr. Harker.

When we turned into our twelve beds at night, Mr. Harker's bed was drawn across the door. On the night of the second day, not being disposed to lie down, and seeing Mr. Harker sitting on his bed, I went and sat beside him, and offered him a pinch of snuff. As Mr. Harker's hand touched mine in taking it from my box, a peculiar shiver crossed him, and he said, "Who is this?"

Following Mr. Harker's eyes, and looking along the room, I saw again the figure I expected, — the second of the two men who had gone down Piccadilly. I rose, and advanced a few steps; then stopped, and looked round at Mr. Harker. He was quite unconcerned, laughed, and said in a pleasant way, "I thought for a moment we had a thirteenth juryman without a bed. But I see it is the moonlight."

Making no revelation to Mr. Harker, but inviting him to take a walk with me to the end of the room, I watched what the figure did. It stood for a few moments by the bedside of each of my eleven brother jurymen, close to the pillow. It always went to the right-hand side of the bed, and always passed out

crossing the foot of the next bed. It seemed, from the action of the head, merely to look down pensively at each recumbent figure. It took no notice of me, or of my bed, which was that nearest to Mr. Harker's. It seemed to go out where the moonlight came in, through a high window, as by an aerial flight of stairs.

Next morning, at breakfast, it appeared that everybody present had dreamed of the murdered man last night, except myself and Mr. Harker.

I now felt as convinced that the second man who had gone down Piccadilly was the murdered man (so to speak), as if it had been borne into my comprehension by his immediate testimony. But even this took place, and in a manner for which I was not at all prepared.

On the fifth day of the trial, when the case for the prosecution was drawing to a close, a miniature of the murdered man, missing from his bedroom upon the discovery of the deed, and afterwards found in a hiding-place where the Murderer had been seen digging, was put in evidence. Having been identified by the witness under examination, it was handed up to the Bench, and thence handed down to be inspected by the Jury. As an officer in a black gown was making his way with it across to me, the figure of the second man who had gone down Piccadilly impetuously started from the crowd, caught the miniature from the officer, and gave it to me with his own hands, at the same time saying, in a low and hollow tone, — before I saw the miniature, which was in a locket, — "*I was younger then, and my face was not then drained of blood.*" It also came between me and the brother juryman to whom I would have given the miniature, and between him and the brother juryman to whom he would have given it, and so passed it on through the whole of our number, and back into my possession. Not one of them, however, detected this.

At table, and generally when we were shut up together in Mr. Harker's custody, we had from the first naturally discussed the day's proceedings a good deal. On that fifth day, the case for the prosecution being closed, and we having that side of the question in a completed shape before us, our discussion was more animated and serious. Among our number was a vestryman, — the densest idiot I have ever seen at large, — who met the plainest evidence with the most preposterous objections, and who

was aided with by two flabby parochial parasites; all the three impanelled from a district so delivered over to Fever, that they ought to have been upon their own trial for five hundred Murders. When these mischievous blockheads were at their loudest, which was towards midnight, while some of us were already preparing for bed, I again saw the murdered man. He stood grimly behind them, beckoning to me. On my going towards them, and striking into the conversation, he immediately retired. This was the beginning of a separate series of appearances, confined to that long room in which we were confined. Whenever a knot of my brother jurymen laid their heads together, I saw the head of the murdered man among theirs. Whenever their comparison of notes was going against him, he would solemnly and irresistibly beckon to me.

It will be borne in mind that down to the production of the miniature, on the fifth day of the trial, I had never seen the Appearance in Court. Three changes occurred now that we entered on the case for the defence. Two of them I will mention together, first. The figure was now in Court continually, and it never there addressed itself to me, but always to the person who was speaking at the time. For instance: the throat of the murdered man had been cut straight across. In the opening speech for the defence, it was suggested that the deceased might have cut his own throat. At that very moment, the figure, with its throat in the dreadful condition referred to (this it had concealed before), stood at the speaker's elbow, motioning across and across its windpipe, now with the right hand, now with the left, vigorously suggesting to the speaker himself the impossibility of such a wound having been self-inflicted by either hand. For another instance: a witness to character, a woman, deposed to the prisoner's being the most amiable of mankind. The figure at that instant stood on the floor before her, looking her full in the face, and pointing out the prisoner's evil countenance with an extended arm and an outstretched finger.

The third change now to be added impressed me strongly as the most marked and striking of all. I do not theorise upon it; I accurately state it, and there leave it. Although the Appearance was not itself perceived by those whom it addressed, its coming close to such persons was invariably attended by some trepidation or disturbance on their part. It seemed to me as if

it were prevented, by laws to which I was not amenable, from fully revealing itself to others, and yet as if it could invisibly, dumbly, and darkly overshadow their minds. When the leading counsel for the defence suggested that hypothesis of suicide, and the figure stood at the learned gentleman's elbow, frightfully sawing at its severed throat, it is undeniable that the counsel faltered in his speech, lost for a few seconds the thread of his ingenuous discourse, wiped his forehead with his handkerchief, and turned extremely pale. When the witness to character was confronted by the Appearance, her eyes most certainly did follow the direction of its pointed finger, and rest in great hesitation and trouble upon the prisoner's face. Two additional illustrations will suffice. On the eighth day of the trial, after the pause which was every day made early in the afternoon for a few minutes' rest and refreshment, I came back into Court with the rest of the Jury some little time before the return of the Judges. Standing up in the box and looking about me, I thought the figure was not there, until, chancing to raise my eyes to the gallery, I saw it bending forward, and leaning over a very decent woman, as if to assure itself whether the Judges had resumed their seats or not. Immediately afterwards that woman screamed, fainted, and was carried out. So with the venerable, sagacious, and patient Judge who conducted the trial. When the case was over, and he settled himself and his papers to sum up, the murdered man, entering by the Judge's door, advanced to his Lordship's desk, and looked eagerly over his shoulder at the pages of his notes which he was turning. A change came over his Lordship's face; his hand stopped; the peculiar shiver, that I knew so well, passed over him; he faltered, "Excuse me, gentlemen, for a few moments. I am somewhat oppressed by the vitiated air;" and did not recover until he had drunk a glass of water.

Through all the monotony of six of those interminable ten days, — the same Judges and others on the bench, the same Murderer in the dock, the same lawyers at the table, the same tones of question and answer rising to the roof of the Court, the same scratching of the Judge's pen, the same ushers going in and out, the same lights kindled at the same hour when there had been any natural light of day, the same foggy curtain outside the great windows when it was foggy, the same rain pattering and dripping when it was rainy, the same footmarks of turnkeys and

prisoner day after day on the same [illegible]
ing and [illegible] the same [illegible]
[illegible] which [illegible]
[illegible] of the Jury for a [illegible]
had [illegible] with [illegible]
[illegible] of his distinctness [illegible]
moment [illegible] than anybody else [illegible]
matter of fact, that I never once saw the Appearance [illegible]
by the name of the murdered man [illegible] at the M[illegible]
and again I wondered, "Why does he not [illegible]" But [illegible]
did [illegible]

Nor did he look at me, after the production of [illegible]
until the last closing minutes of the trial arrived. We [illegible]
to consider at seven minutes before ten at night. I [illegible]
vestryman and his two parochial parasites gave [illegible]
trouble that we twice returned into Court to beg [illegible]
extract from the Judge's notes re-read. Nine of [illegible]

[illegible]

II

THE SIGNAL-MAN[1]

"HALLOA! Below there!"

When he heard a voice thus calling to him, he was standing at the door of his box, with a flag in his hand, furled round its short pole. One would have thought, considering the nature of the ground, that he could not have doubted from what quarter the voice came; but, instead of looking up to where I stood on the top of the steep cutting nearly over his head, he turned himself about and looked down the Line. There was something remarkable in his manner of doing so, though I could not have said for my life what. But I know it was remarkable enough to attract my notice, even though his figure was foreshortened and shadowed, down in the deep trench, and mine was high above him, so steeped in the glow of an angry sunset, that I had shaded my eyes with my hand before I saw him at all.

"Halloa! Below!"

From looking down the Line, he turned himself about again, and, raising his eyes, saw my figure high above him.

"Is there any path by which I can come down and speak to you?"

He looked up at me without replying, and I looked down at him without pressing him too soon with a repetition of my idle question. Just then there came a vague vibration in the earth and air, quickly changing into a violent pulsation, and an on-coming rush that caused me to start back, as though it had force to draw me down. When such vapour as rose to my height from this rapid train had passed me, and was skimming away over the landscape, I looked down again, and saw him refurling the flag he had shown while the train went by.

I repeated my inquiry. After a pause, during which he seemed to regard me with fixed attention, he motioned with his rolled-up flag towards a point on my level, some two or three hundred yards distant. I called down to him, "All right!"

[1] This story appeared as a portion of the Christmas number for 1866, *Mugby Junction*, of which other portions follow in *Barbox Brothers* and *The Boy at Mugby*.

sunshine from between those high stone walls? Why, that depended upon times and circumstances. Under some conditions there would be less upon the Line than under others, and the same held good as to certain hours of the day and night. In bright weather he did choose occasions for getting a little above these lower shadows; but being at all times liable to be called by his electric bell, and at such times listening for it with redoubled anxiety, the relief was less than I would suppose.

He took me into his box, where there was a fire, a desk for an official book in which he had to make certain entries, a telegraphic instrument with its dial, face, and needles, and the little bell of which he had spoken. On my trusting that he would excuse the remark that he had been well educated, and (I hoped I might say without offence) perhaps educated above that station, he observed that instances of slight incongruity in such wise would rarely be found wanting among large bodies of men; that he had heard it was so in workhouses, in the police force, even in that last desperate resource, the army; and that he knew it was so, more or less, in any great railway staff. He had been, when young (if I could believe it, sitting in that hut — he scarcely could), a student of natural philosophy, and had attended lectures; but he had run wild, misused his opportunities, gone down, and never risen again. He had no complaint to offer about that. He had made his bed, and he lay upon it. It was far too late to make another.

All that I have here condensed he said in a quiet manner, with his grave dark regards divided between me and the fire. He threw in the word "Sir" from time to time, and especially when he referred to his youth, — as though to request me to understand that he claimed to be nothing but what I found him. He was several times interrupted by the little bell, and had to read off messages and send replies. Once he had to stand without the door, and display a flag as a train passed, and make some verbal communication to the driver. In the discharge of his duties, I observed him to be remarkably exact and vigilant, breaking off his discourse at a syllable, and remaining silent until what he had to do was done.

In a word, I should have set this man down as one of the safest of men to be employed in that capacity, but for the circumstance that while he was speaking to me he twice broke off

He directed a most curious look towards the red light near the tunnel's mouth, and looked all about it, as if something were missing from it, and then looked at me.

That light was part of his charge? Was it not?

He answered in a low voice, "Don't you know it is?"

The monstrous thought came into my mind, as I perused the fixed eyes and the saturnine face, that this was a spirit, not a man. I have speculated since whether there may have been infection in his mind.

In my turn, I stepped back. But, in making the action, I detected in his eyes some latent fear of me. This put the monstrous thought to flight.

"You look at me," I said, forcing a smile, "as if you had a dread of me."

"I was doubtful," he returned, "whether I had seen you before."

"Where?"

He pointed to the red light he had looked at.

"There?" I said.

Intently watchful of me, he replied (but without sound), "Yes."

"My good fellow, what should I do there? However, be that as it may, I never was there, you may swear."

"I think I may," he rejoined. "Yes; I am sure I may."

His manner cleared, like my own. He replied to my remarks with readiness, and in well-chosen words. Had he much to do there? Yes; that was to say, he had enough responsibility to bear; but exactness and watchfulness were what was required of him, and of actual work — manual labour — he had next to none. To change that signal, to trim those lights, and to turn this iron handle now and then, was all he had to do under that head. Regarding those many long and lonely hours of which I seemed to make so much, he could only say that the routine of his life had shaped itself into that form, and he had grown used to it. He had taught himself a language down here, — if only to know it by sight, and to have formed his own crude ideas of its pronunciation, could be called learning it. He had also worked at fractions and decimals, and tried a little algebra; but he was, and had been as a boy, a poor hand at figures. Was it necessary for him when on duty always to remain in that channel of damp air, and could he never rise into the

"For no other reason?"

"What other reason could I possibly have?"

"You had no feeling that they were conveyed to you in any supernatural way?"

"No."

He wished me good night, and held up his light. I walked by the side of the down Line of rails (with a very disagreeable sensation of a train coming behind me) until I found the path. It was easier to mount than to descend, and I got back to my inn without any adventure.

Punctual to my appointment, I placed my foot on the first notch of the zigzag next night as the distant clocks were striking eleven. He was waiting for me at the bottom, with his white light on. "I have not called out," I said when we came close together; "may I speak now?" "By all means, sir." "Good night, then, and here 's my hand." "Good night, sir, and here 's mine." With that we walked side by side to his box, entered it, closed the door, and sat down by the fire.

"I have made up my mind, sir," he began, bending forward as soon as we were seated, and speaking in a tone but a little above a whisper, "that you shall not have to ask me twice what troubles me. I took you for some one else yesterday evening. That troubles me."

"That mistake?"

"No. That some one else."

"Who is it?"

"I don't know."

"Like me?"

"I don't know. I never saw the face. The left arm is across the face, and the right arm is waved, — violently waved. This way."

I followed his action with my eyes, and it was the action of an arm gesticulating, with the utmost passion and vehemence, "For God's sake, clear the way!"

"One moonlight night," said the man, "I was sitting here, when I heard a voice cry, 'Halloa! Below there!' I started up, looked from that door, and saw this Some one else standing by the red light near the tunnel, waving as I just now showed you. The voice seemed hoarse with shouting, and it cried, 'Look out! Look out!' And then again, 'Halloa! Below there! Look out!' I caught up my lamp, turned it on red, and

nd ran towards the figure, calling, 'What's wrong? What as happened? Where?' It stood just outside the blackess of the tunnel. I advanced so close upon it that I wondered t its keeping the sleeve across its eyes. I ran right up at it, nd had my hand stretched out to pull the sleeve away, when was gone."

"Into the tunnel?" said I.

"No. I ran on into the tunnel, five hundred yards. I opped, and held my lamp above my head, and saw the figures f the measured distance, and saw the wet stains stealing down e walls and trickling through the arch. I ran out again faster an I had run in (for I had a mortal abhorrence of the place pon me), and I looked all round the red light with my own d light, and I went up the iron ladder to the gallery atop of , and I came down again, and ran back here. I telegraphed oth ways, 'An alarm has been given. Is anything wrong?' he answer came back, both ways, 'All well.'"

Resisting the slow touch of a frozen finger tracing out my pine, I showed him how that this figure must be a deception f his sense of sight; and how that figures, originating in disase of the delicate nerves that minister to the functions of the ye, were known to have often troubled patients, some of whom ad become conscious of the nature of their affliction, and had ven proved it by experiments upon themselves. "As to an imginary cry," said I, "do but listen for a moment to the wind this unnatural valley while we speak so low, and to the wild arp it makes of the telegraph wires!"

That was all very well, he returned, after we had sat listeng for a while, and he ought to know something of the wind nd the wires, — he who so often passed long winter nights here, alone and watching. But he would beg to remark that e had not finished.

I asked his pardon, and he slowly added these words, touchg my arm: —

"Within six hours after the Appearance, the memorable ccident on this Line happened, and within ten hours the dead nd wounded were brought along through the tunnel over the pot where the figure had stood."

A disagreeable shudder crept over me, but I did my best gainst it. It was not to be denied, I rejoined, that this was a emarkable coincidence, calculated deeply to impress his mind.

But it was unquestionable that remarkable coincidences did o tionally occur, and they must be taken into account in dea with such a subject. Though to be sure I must admit, I ad (for I thought I saw that he was going to bring the objec to bear upon me), men of common sense did not allow much coincidences in making the ordinary calculations of life.

He again begged to remark that he had not finished.

I again begged his pardon for being betrayed into inte tions.

"This," he said, again laying his hand upon my arm, glancing over his shoulder with hollow eyes, "was just a y ago. Six or seven months passed, and I had recovered from surprise and shock, when one morning, as the day was b ing, I, standing at the door, looked towards the red light, saw the spectre again." He stopped with a fixed look at m

"Did it cry out?"

"No. It was silent."

"Did it wave its arm?"

"No. It leaned against the shaft of the light, with b hands before the face. Like this."

Once more I followed his action with my eyes. It wa action of mourning. I have seen such an attitude in s figures on tombs.

"Did you go up to it?"

"I came in and sat down, partly to collect my thoug partly because it had turned me faint. When I went to door again, daylight was above me, and the ghost was gone

"But nothing followed? Nothing came of this?"

He touched me on the arm with his forefinger twice or th giving a ghastly nod each time.

"That very day, as a train came out of the tunnel, I noti at a carriage window on my side, what looked like a confu of hands and heads, and something waved. I saw it ju time to signal the driver, Stop! He shut off, and put his b on, but the train drifted past here a hundred and fifty y or more. I ran after it, and, as I went along, heard ter screams and cries. A beautiful young lady had died ins taneously in one of the compartments, and was brought in h and laid down on this floor between us."

Involuntarily I pushed my chair back, as I looked from boards at which he pointed to himself.

"True, sir. True. Precisely as it happened, so I tell it you."

I could think of nothing to say to any purpose, and my mouth was very dry. The wind and the wires took up the story with a long lamenting wail.

He resumed. "Now, sir, mark this, and judge how my mind is troubled. The spectre came back a week ago. Ever since, it has been there, now and again, by fits and starts."

"At the light?"

"At the danger-light."

"What does it seem to do?"

He repeated, if possible with increased passion and vehemence, that former gesticulation of, "For God's sake, clear the way!"

Then he went on. "I have no peace or rest for it. It calls to me, for many minutes together, in an agonised manner, 'Below there! Look out! Look out!' It stands waving to me. It rings my little bell —"

I caught at that. "Did it ring your bell yesterday evening when I was here, and you went to the door?"

"Twice."

"Why, see," said I, "how your imagination misleads you! My eyes were on the bell, and my ears were open to the bell, and, if I am a living man, it did NOT ring at those times. No, nor at any other time, except when it was rung in the natural course of physical things by the station communicating with you."

He shook his head. "I have never made a mistake as to that yet, sir. I have never confused the spectre's ring with the man's. The ghost's ring is a strange vibration in the bell that it derives from nothing else, and I have not asserted that the bell stirs to the eye. I don't wonder that you failed to hear it. But *I* heard it."

"And did the spectre seem to be there when you looked out?"

"It WAS there."

"Both times?"

He repeated firmly: "Both times."

"Will you come to the door with me, and look for it now?"

He bit his under lip as though he were somewhat unwilling, but arose. I opened the door, and stood on the step, while he

stood in the doorway. There was the danger-light. Th
was the dismal mouth of the tunnel. There were the high, w
stone walls of the cutting. There were the stars above them

"Do you see it?" I asked him, taking particular note of
face. His eyes were prominent and strained, but not
much more so, perhaps, than my own had been when I
directed them earnestly towards the same spot.

"No," he answered. "It is not there."

"Agreed," said I.

We went in again, shut the door, and resumed our seats
was thinking how best to improve this advantage, if it mig
called one, when he took up the conversation in such a
of course way, so assuming that there could be no serious
tion of fact between us, that I felt myself placed in the w
of positions.

"By this time you will fully understand, sir," he said,
what troubles me so dreadfully is the question, What do
spectre mean?"

I was not sure, I told him, that I did fully understand

"What is its warning against?" he said, ruminating
his eyes on the fire, and only by times turning them
"What is the danger? Where is the danger? Th
danger overhanging somewhere on the Line. Some d
calamity will happen. It is not to be doubted this thi
after what has gone before. But surely this is a cruel h
of *me*. What can *I* do?"

He pulled out his handkerchief, and wiped the drop
his heated forehead.

"If I telegraph Danger on either side of me, or on
can give no reason for it," he went on, wiping the palm
hands. "I should get into trouble, and do no good.
would think I was mad. This is the way it would w
Message: 'Danger! Take care!' Answer: 'What D
Where?' Message: 'Don't know. But, for God's sak
care!' They would displace me. What else could they

His pain of mind was most pitiable to see. It w
mental torture of a conscientious man, oppressed beyond
ance by an unintelligible responsibility involving life.

"When it first stood under the danger-light," he w
putting his dark hair back from his head, and drawi
hands outward across and across his temples in an extrem

istress, "why not tell me where that accident was to
·if it must happen? Why not tell me how it could
, — if it could have been averted? When on its
ning it hid its face, why not tell me, instead, 'She is
e. Let them keep her at home'? If it came, on
occasions, only to show me that its warnings were
so to prepare me for the third, why not warn me
w? And I, Lord help me! A mere poor signal-
nis solitary station! Why not go to somebody with
e believed, and power to act?"

saw him in this state, I saw that for the poor man's
ell as for the public safety, what I had to do for the
to compose his mind. Therefore, setting aside all
f reality or unreality between us, I represented to him
ver thoroughly discharged his duty must do well, and
ast it was his comfort that he understood his duty,
did not understand these confounding Appearances.
fort I succeeded far better than in the attempt to
out of his conviction. He became calm; the occu-
cidental to his post as the night advanced began to
er demands on his attention; and I left him at two in
ng. I had offered to stay through the night, but he
hear of it.

more than once looked back at the red light as I
the pathway, that I did not like the red light, and
uld have slept but poorly if my bed had been under
o reason to conceal. Nor did I like the two sequences
ident and the dead girl. I see no reason to conceal
.

nat ran most in my thoughts was the consideration,
I to act, having become the recipient of this dis-
I had proved the man to be intelligent, vigilant,
g, and exact; but how long might he remain so, in
f mind? Though in a subordinate position, still he
st important trust, and would I (for instance) like to
own life on the chances of his continuing to execute it
sion?

to overcome a feeling that there would be something
s in my communicating what he had told me to his
Company, without first being plain with himself
idle course to him, I ultimately resolved to

offer to accompany him (otherwise keeping his secret for t
present) to the wisest medical practitioner we could hear of
those parts, and to take his opinion. A change in his time
duty would come round next night, he had apprised me, a
he would be off an hour or two after sunrise, and on again so
after sunset. I had appointed to return accordingly.

Next evening was a lovely evening, and I walked out ea
to enjoy it. The sun was not yet quite down when I travers
the field path near the top of the deep cutting. I would exte
my walk for an hour, I said to myself, half an hour on and h
an hour back, and it would then be time to go to my sign
man's box.

Before pursuing my stroll, I stepped to the brink, and m
chanically looked down, from the point from which I had fi
seen him. I cannot describe the thrill that seized upon m
when, close at the mouth of the tunnel, I saw the appearance
a man, with his left sleeve across his eyes, passionately wavi
his right arm.

The nameless horror that oppressed me passed in a mome
for in a moment I saw that this appearance of a man was a m
indeed, and that there was a little group of other men, stand
at a short distance, to whom he seemed to be rehearsing t
gesture he made. The danger-light was not yet lighte
Against its shaft, a little low hut, entirely new to me, had be
made of some wooden supports and tarpaulin. It looked
bigger than a bed.

With an irresistible sense that something was wrong, — w
a flashing self-reproachful fear that fatal mischief had come
my leaving the man there, and causing no one to be sent
overlook or correct what he did, — I descended the notch
path with all the speed I could make.

"What is the matter?" I asked the men.

"Signal-man killed this morning, sir."

"Not the man belonging to that box?"

"Yes, sir."

"Not the man I know?"

"You will recognise him, sir, if you knew him," said the m
who spoke for the others, solemnly uncovering his own head a
raising an end of the tarpaulin, "for his face is quite compos

"O, how did this happen, how did this happen?" I ask
turning from one to another as the hut closed in again.

"He was cut down by an engine, sir. No man in England knew his work better. But somehow he was not clear of the outer rail. It was just at broad day. He had struck the light, and had the lamp in his hand. As the engine came out of the tunnel, his back was towards her, and she cut him down. That man drove her, and was showing how it happened. Show the gentleman, Tom."

The man, who wore a rough dark dress, stepped back to his former place at the mouth of the tunnel.

"Coming round the curve in the tunnel, sir," he said, "I saw him at the end, like as if I saw him down a perspective-glass. There was no time to check speed, and I knew him to be very careful. As he did n't seem to take heed of the whistle, I shut it off when we were running down upon him, and called to him as loud as I could call."

"What did you say?"

"I said, 'Below there! Look out! Look out! For God's sake, clear the way!'"

I started.

"Ah! it was a dreadful time, sir. I never left off calling to him. I put this arm before my eyes not to see, and I waved this arm to the last; but it was no use."

Without prolonging the narrative to dwell on any one of its curious circumstances more than on any other, I may, in closing it, point out the coincidence that the warning of the engine-driver included, not only the words which the unfortunate signal-man had repeated to me as haunting him, but also the words which I myself — not he — had attached, and that only in my own mind, to the gesticulation he had imitated.

MUGBY JUNCTION

MUGBY JUNCTION

CHAPTER I

BARBOX BROTHERS

I

"GUARD! What place is this?"

"Mugby Junction, sir."

"A windy place!"

"Yes, it mostly is, sir."

"And looks comfortless, indeed!"

"Yes, it generally does, sir."

"Is it a rainy night still?"

"Pours, sir."

"Open the door. I'll get out."

"You'll have, sir," said the guard, glistening with drops wet, and looking at the tearful face of his watch by the li of his lantern as the traveller descended, "three minutes her

"More, I think. — For I am not going on."

"Thought you had a through ticket, sir?"

"So I have, but I shall sacrifice the rest of it. I want luggage."

"Please to come to the van and point it out, sir. Be g enough to look very sharp, sir. Not a moment to spare."

The guard hurried to the luggage van, and the traveller h ried after him. The guard got into it, and the traveller loo into it.

"Those two large black portmanteaus in the corner wh your light shines. Those are mine."

"Name upon 'em, sir?"

"Barbox Brothers."

"Stand clear, sir, if you please. One. Two. Right!"

Lamp waved. Signal lights ahead already changing. Sh from engine. Train gone.

"Mugby Junction!" said the traveller, pulling up the woollen muffler round his throat with both hands. "At past three o'clock of a tempestuous morning! So!"

He spoke to himself. There was no one else to speak to. Perhaps, though there had been any one else to speak to, he would have preferred to speak to himself. Speaking to himself, he spoke to a man within five years of fifty either way, who had turned grey too soon, like a neglected fire; a man of pondering habit, brooding carriage of the head, and suppressed internal voice; a man with many indications on him of having been much alone.

He stood unnoticed on the dreary platform, except by the rain and by the wind. Those two vigilant assailants made a rush at him. "Very well," said he, yielding. "It signifies nothing to me to what quarter I turn my face."

Thus, at Mugby Junction, at past three o'clock of a tempestuous morning, the traveller went where the weather drove him.

Not but what he could make a stand when he was so minded, for coming to the end of the roofed shelter (it is of considerable extent at Mugby Junction), and looking out upon the dark night, with a yet darker spirit-wing of storm beating its wild way through it, he faced about, and held his own as ruggedly in the difficult direction as he had held it in the easier one. Thus, with a steady step, the traveller went up and down, up and down, up and down, seeking nothing, and finding it.

A place replete with shadowy shapes, this Mugby Junction in the black hours of the four-and-twenty. Mysterious goods trains, covered with palls and gliding on like vast weird funerals, conveying themselves guiltily away from the presence of the few lighted lamps, as if their freight had come to a secret and unlawful end. Half miles of coal pursuing in a Detective manner, following when they lead, stopping when they stop, backing when they back. Red-hot embers showering out upon the ground, down this dark avenue, and down the other, as if torturing fires were being raked clear; concurrently, shrieks and groans and grinds invading the ear, as if the tortured were at the height of their suffering. Iron-barred cages full of cattle jangling by midway, the drooping beasts with horns entangled, eyes frozen with terror, and mouths, too; at least they have long icicles (or what seem so) hanging from their lips. Un-

known languages in the air, conspiring in red, green, and white characters. An earthquake, accompanied with thunder and lightning, going up express to London. Now, all quiet, all rusty, wind and rain in possession, lamps extinguished, Mugby Junction dead and indistinct, with its robe drawn over its head, like Cæsar.

Now, too, as the belated traveller plodded up and down, a shadowy train went by him in the gloom which was no other than the train of a life. From whatsoever intangible deep cutting or dark tunnel it emerged, here it came, unsummoned and unannounced, stealing upon him, and passing away into obscurity. Here mournfully went by a child who had never had a childhood or known a parent, inseparable from a youth with a bitter sense of his namelessness, coupled to a man the enforced business of whose best years had been distasteful and oppressive, linked to an ungrateful friend, dragging after him a woman once beloved. Attendant, with many a clank and wrench, were lumbering cares, dark meditations, huge dim disappointments, monotonous years, a long jarring line of the discords of a solitary and unhappy existence.

— "Yours, sir?"

The traveller recalled his eyes from the waste into which they had been staring, and fell back a step or so under the abruptness, and perhaps the chance appropriateness, of the question.

"Oh! My thoughts were not here for the moment. Yes. Yes. Those two portmanteaus are mine. Are you a Porter?"

"On Porter's wages, sir. But I am Lamps."

The traveller looked a little confused.

"Who did you say you are?"

"Lamps, sir," showing an oily cloth in his hand, as further explanation.

"Surely, surely. Is there any hotel or tavern here?"

"Not exactly here, sir. There is a Refreshment Room here, but —" Lamps, with a mighty serious look, gave his head a warning roll that plainly added — "but it's a blessed circumstance for you that it's not open."

"You could n't recommend it, I see, if it was available?"

"Ask your pardon, sir. If it was —"

"Open?"

"It ain't my place, as a paid servant of the company, to give

my opinion on any of the company's toepics," — he pronounced it more like toothpicks, — "beyond lamp-ile and cottons," returned Lamps in a confidential tone; "but speaking as a man, I would n't recommend my father (if he was to come to life again) to go and try how he 'd be treated at the Refreshment Room. Not speaking as a man, no, I would *not*."

The traveller nodded conviction. "I suppose I can put up in the town? There is a town here?" For the traveller (though a stay-at-home compared with most travellers) had been, like many others, carried on the steam winds and the iron tides through that Junction before, without having ever, as one might say, gone ashore there.

"Oh yes, there 's a town, sir! Anyways, there 's town enough to put up in. But," following the glance of the other at his luggage, "this is a very dead time of the night with us, sir. The deadest time. I might a'most call it our deadest and buriedest time."

"No porters about?"

"Well, sir, you see," returned Lamps, confidential again, "they in general goes off with the gas. That 's how it is. And they seem to have overlooked you, through your walking to the furder end of the platform. But in about twelve minutes or so, she may be up."

"Who may be up?"

"The three forty-two, sir. She goes off in a sidin' till the Up X passes, and then she" — here an air of hopeful vagueness pervaded Lamps — "doos all as lays in her power."

"I doubt if I comprehend the arrangement."

"I doubt if anybody do, sir. She 's a Parliamentary, sir. And, you see, a Parliamentary, or a Skirmishun —"

"Do you mean an Excursion?"

"That 's it, sir. — A Parliamentary or a Skirmishun, she mostly *doos* go off into a sidin'. But when she *can* get a chance, she 's whistled out of it, and she 's whistled up into doin' all as" — Lamps again wore the air of a highly sanguine man who hoped for the best — "all as lays in her power."

He then explained that porters on duty, being required to be in attendance on the Parliamentary matron in question, would doubtless turn up with the gas. In the mean time, if the gentleman would not very much object to the smell of lamp-oil, and would accept the warmth of his little room — The gentle-

man, being by this time very cold, instantly closed with the proposal.

A greasy little cabin it was, suggestive, to the sense of smell, of a cabin in a Whaler. But there was a bright fire burning in its rusty grate, and on the floor there stood a wooden stand of newly trimmed and lighted lamps, ready for carriage service. They made a bright show, and their light, and the warmth, accounted for the popularity of the room, as borne witness to by many impressions of velveteen trousers on a form by the fire, and many rounded smears and smudges of stooping velveteen shoulders on the adjacent wall. Various untidy shelves accommodated a quantity of lamps and oil-cans, and also a fragrant collection of what looked like the pocket-handkerchiefs of the whole lamp family.

As Barbox Brothers (so to call the traveller on the warranty of his luggage) took his seat upon the form, and warmed his now ungloved hands at the fire, he glanced aside at a little dirty desk, much blotched with ink, which his elbow touched. Upon it were some scraps of coarse paper, and a superannuated steel pen in very reduced and gritty circumstances.

From glancing at the scraps of paper, he turned involuntarily to his host, and said, with some roughness: —

"Why, you are never a poet, man?"

Lamps had certainly not the conventional appearance of one, as he stood modestly rubbing his squab nose with a handkerchief so exceedingly oily, that he might have been in the act of mistaking himself for one of his charges. He was a spare man of about the Barbox Brothers time of life, with his features whimsically drawn upward as if they were attracted by the roots of his hair. He had a peculiarly shining, transparent complexion, probably occasioned by constant oleaginous application; and his attractive hair, being cut short, and being grizzled, and standing straight up on end as if it in its turn were attracted by some invisible magnet above it, the top of his head was not very unlike a lamp-wick.

"But, to be sure, it's no business of mine," said Barbox Brothers. "That was an impertinent observation on my part. Be what you like."

"Some people, sir," remarked Lamps, in a tone of apology, "are sometimes what they don't like."

"Nobody knows that better than I do," sighed the other. "I have been what I don't like all my life."

"When I first took, sir," resumed Lamps, "to composing little Comic-Songs-like —"

Barbox Brothers eyed him with great disfavour.

"— To composing little Comic-Songs-like — and what was more hard — to singing 'em afterwards," says Lamps, "it went against the grain at that time, it did indeed."

Something that was not all oil here shining in Lamps's eye, Barbox Brothers withdrew his own a little disconcerted, looked at the fire, and put a foot on the top bar. "Why did you do it, then?" he asked after a short pause; abruptly enough, but in a softer tone. "If you did n't want to do it, why did you do it? Where did you sing them? Public-house?"

To which Mr. Lamps returned the curious reply, "Bedside."

At this moment, while the traveller looked at him for elucidation, Mugby Junction started suddenly, trembled violently, and opened its gas eyes. "She 's got up!" Lamps announced, excited. "What lays in her power is sometimes more, and sometimes less; but it 's laid in her power to get up to-night, by George!"

The legend "Barbox Brothers," in large white letters on two black surfaces, was very soon afterwards trundling on a truck through a silent street, and, when the owner of the legend had shivered on the pavement half an hour, what time the porter's knocks at the Inn Door knocked up the whole town first, and the Inn last, he groped his way into the close air of a shut-up house, and so groped between the sheets of a shut-up bed that seemed to have been expressly refrigerated for him when last made.

II

"You remember me, Young Jackson?"

"What do I remember if not you? You are my first remembrance. It was you who told me that was my name. It was you who told me that on every twentieth of December my life had a penitential anniversary in it called a birthday. I suppose the last communication was truer than the first!"

"What am I like, Young Jackson?"

"You are like a blight all through the year to me. You hard-lined, thin-lipped, repressive, changeless woman with a wax mask on! You are like the Devil to me; most of all when you teach me religious things, for you make me abhor them."

"You remember me, Mr. Young Jackson?" In another voice from another quarter.

"Most gratefully, sir. You were the ray of hope and prospering ambition in my life. When I attended your course, I believed that I should come to be a great healer, and I felt almost happy — even though I was still the one boarder in the house with that horrible mask, and ate and drank in silence and constraint with the mask before me, every day. As I had done every, every, every day, through my school-time and from my earliest recollection."

"What am I like, Mr. Young Jackson?"

"You are like a Superior Being to me. You are like Nature beginning to reveal herself to me. I hear you again, as one of the hushed crowd of young men kindling under the power of your presence and knowledge, and you bring into my eyes the only exultant tears that ever stood in them."

"You remember Me, Mr. Young Jackson?" In a grating voice from quite another quarter.

"Too well. You made your ghostly appearance in my life one day, and announced that its course was to be suddenly and wholly changed. You showed me which was my wearisome seat in the Galley of Barbox Brothers. (When *they* were, if they ever were, is unknown to me; there was nothing of them but the name when I bent to the oar.) You told me what I was to do, and what to be paid; you told me afterwards, at intervals of years, when I was to sign for the Firm, when I became a partner, when I became the Firm. I know no more of it, or of myself."

"What am I like, Mr. Young Jackson?"

"You are like my father, I sometimes think. You are hard enough and cold enough so to have brought up an unacknowledged son. I see your scanty figure, your close brown suit, and your tight brown wig; but you, too, wear a wax mask to your death. You never by a chance remove it — it never by a chance falls off — and I know no more of you."

Throughout this dialogue, the traveller spoke to himself at his window in the morning, as he had spoken to himself at the Junction over-night. And as he had then looked in the darkness, a man who had turned grey too soon, like a neglected fire, so he now looked in the sunlight, an ashier grey, like a fire which the brightness of the sun put out.

The firm of Barbox Brothers had been some offshoot or irregular branch of the Public Notary and bill-broking tree. It had gained for itself a griping reputation before the days of Young Jackson, and the reputation had stuck to it and to him. As he had imperceptibly come into possession of the dim den up in the corner of a court off Lombard Street, on whose grimy windows the inscription Barbox Brothers had for many long years daily interposed itself between him and the sky, so he had insensibly found himself a personage held in chronic distrust, whom it was essential to screw tight to every transaction in which he engaged, whose word was never to be taken without his attested bond, whom all dealers with openly set up guards and wards against. This character had come upon him through no act of his own. It was as if the original Barbox had stretched himself down upon the office floor, and had thither caused to be conveyed Young Jackson in his sleep, and had there effected a metempsychosis and exchange of persons with him. The discovery — aided in its turn by the deceit of the only woman he had ever loved, and the deceit of the only friend he had ever made, who eloped from him to be married together — the discovery, so followed up, completed what his earliest rearing had begun. He shrank, abashed, within the form of Barbox, and lifted up his head and heart no more.

But he did at last effect one great release in his condition. He broke the oar he had plied so long, and he scuttled and sank the galley. He prevented the gradual retirement of an old conventional business from him, by taking the initiative and retiring from it. With enough to live on (though, after all, with not too much), he obliterated the firm of Barbox Brothers from the pages of the Post-Office Directory and the face of the earth, leaving nothing of it but its name on two portmanteaus.

"For one must have some name in going about, for people to pick up," he explained to Mugby High Street, through the Inn window, "and that name at least was real once. Whereas, Young Jackson! — Not to mention its being a sadly satirical misnomer for Old Jackson."

He took up his hat and walked out, just in time to see, passing along on the opposite side of the way, a velveteen man, carrying his day's dinner in a small bundle that might have been larger without suspicion of gluttony, and pelting away towards the Junction at a great pace.

"There's Lamps," said Barbox Brothers. "And by the bye—"

Ridiculous, surely, that a man so serious, so self-contained, and not yet three days emancipated from a routine of drudgery, should stand rubbing his chin in the street, in a brown study about Comic Songs.

"Bedside?" said Barbox Brothers testily. "Sing them at the bedside? Why at the bedside, unless he goes to bed drunk? Does, I should n't wonder. But it's no business of mine. Let me see. Mugby Junction, Mugby Junction. Where shall I go next? As it came into my head last night when I woke from an uneasy sleep in the carriage and found myself here, I can go anywhere from here. Where shall I go? I'll go and look at the Junction by daylight. There's no hurry, and I may like the look of one Line better than another."

But there were so many Lines. Gazing down upon them from a bridge at the Junction, it was as if the concentrating Companies formed a great Industrial Exhibition of the works of extraordinary ground-spiders that spun iron. And then so many of the Lines went such wonderful ways, so crossing and curving among one another, that the eye lost them. And then some of them appeared to start with the fixed intention of going five hundred miles, and all of a sudden gave it up at an insignificant barrier, or turned off into a work-shop. And then others, like intoxicated men, went a little way very straight, and surprisingly slued round and came back again. And then others were so chock-full of trucks of coal, others were so blocked with trucks of casks, others were so gorged with trucks of ballast, others were so set apart for wheeled objects like immense iron cotton-reels; while others were so bright and clear, and others were so delivered over to rust and ashes and idle wheelbarrows out of work, with their legs in the air (looking much like their masters on strike), that there was no beginning, middle, or end to the bewilderment.

Barbox Brothers stood puzzled on the bridge, passing his right hand across the lines on his forehead, which multiplied while he looked down, as if the railway Lines were getting themselves photographed on that sensitive plate. Then was heard a distant ringing of bells and blowing of whistles. Then, puppet-looking heads of men popped out of boxes in perspective, and popped in again. Then, prod

razors, set up on end, began shaving the atmosphere. Then, several locomotive engines in several directions began to scream and be agitated. Then, along one avenue a train came in. Then, along another two trains appeared that did n't come in, but stopped without. Then, bits of trains broke off. Then, a struggling horse became involved with them. Then, the locomotives shared the bits of trains, and ran away with the whole.

"I have not made my next move much clearer by this. No hurry. No need to make up my mind to-day, or to-morrow, nor yet the day after. I 'll take a walk."

It fell out somehow (perhaps he meant it should) that the walk tended to the platform at which he had alighted, and to Lamps's room. But Lamps was not in his room. A pair of velveteen shoulders were adapting themselves to one of the impressions on the wall by Lamps's fireplace, but otherwise the room was void. In passing back to get out of the station again, he learnt the cause of this vacancy, by catching sight of Lamps on the opposite line of railway, skipping along the top of a train, from carriage to carriage, and catching lighted namesakes thrown up to him by a coadjutor.

"He is busy. He has not much time for composing or singing Comic Songs this morning, I take it."

The direction he pursued now was into the country, keeping very near to the side of one great Line of railway, and within easy view of others. "I have half a mind," he said, glancing around, "to settle the question from this point, by saying, 'I 'll take this set of rails, or that, or t' other, and stick to it.' They separate themselves from the confusion, out here, and go their ways."

Ascending a gentle hill of some extent, he came to a few cottages. There, looking about him as a very reserved man might who had never looked about him in his life before, he saw some six or eight young children come merrily trooping and whooping from one of the cottages, and disperse. But not until they had all turned at the little garden gate, and kissed their hands to a face at the upper window; a low window enough, although the upper, for the cottage had but a story of one room above the ground.

Now, that the children should do this was nothing; but that they should do this to a face lying on the sill of the open window, turned toward them in a horizontal position, and

The child nodded.

"Good boy."

"Tound it out, have you?" said the child.

"Yes, I have found it out. What would you do with twopence, if I gave it you?"

"Pend it."

The knock-down promptitude of this reply leaving him not a leg to stand upon, Barbox Brothers produced the twopence with great lameness, and withdrew in a state of humiliation.

But, seeing the face on the window-sill as he passed the cottage, he acknowledged its presence there with a gesture, which was not a nod, not a bow, not a removal of his hat from his head, but was a diffident compromise between or struggle with all three. The eyes in the face seemed amused, or cheered, or both, and the lips modestly said, "Good day to you, sir."

"I find I must stick for a time to Mugby Junction," said Barbox Brothers with much gravity, after once more stopping on his return road to look at the Lines where they went their several ways so quietly. "I can't make up my mind yet which iron road to take. In fact, I must get a little accustomed to the Junction before I can decide."

So he announced at the Inn that he was "going to stay on, for the present," and improved his acquaintance with the Junction that night, and again next morning, and again next night and morning; going down to the station, mingling with the people there, looking about him down all the avenues of railway, and beginning to take an interest in the incomings and outgoings of the trains. At first, he often put his head into Lamps's little room, but he never found Lamps there. A pair or two of velveteen shoulders he usually found there, stooping over the fire, sometimes in connection with a clasp-knife and a piece of bread and meat; but the answer to his inquiry, "Where's Lamps?" was, either that he was "t'other side the line," or, that it was his off-time, or (in the latter case), his own personal introduction to another Lamps who was not his Lamps. However, he was not so desperately set upon seeing Lamps now; but he bore the disappointment. Nor did he so wholly devote himself to his severe application to the study of Mugby Junction as to neglect exercise. On the contrary, he took a walk every day, and always the same walk. But the

ful. The measure at length stopped, and was succeeded by a murmuring of young voices, and then by a short song which he made out to be about the current month of the year, and about what work it yielded to the labourers in the fields and farmyards. Then there was a stir of little feet, and the children came trooping and whooping out, as on the previous day. And again, as on the previous day, they all turned at the garden gate and kissed their hands — evidently to the face on the window-sill, though Barbox Brothers from his retired post of disadvantage at the corner could not see it.

But as the children dispersed, he cut off one small straggler — a brown-faced boy with flaxen hair — and said to him: —

"Come here, little one. Tell me, whose house is that?"

The child, with one swarthy arm held up across his eyes, half in shyness, and half ready for defence, said from behind the inside of his elbow: —

"Phœbe's."

"And who," said Barbox Brothers, quite as much embarrassed by his part in the dialogue as the child could possibly be by his, "is Phœbe?"

To which the child made answer, "Why, Phœbe, of course."

The small but sharp observer had eyed his questioner closely, and had taken his moral measure. He lowered his guard, and rather assumed a tone with him, as having discovered him to be an unaccustomed person in the art of polite conversation.

"Phœbe," said the child, "can't be anybobby else but Phœbe. Can she?"

"No, I suppose not."

"Well," returned the child, "then why did you ask me?"

Deeming it prudent to shift his ground, Barbox Brothers took up a new position.

"What do you do there? Up there in that room where the open window is. What do you do there?"

"Cool," said the child.

"Eh?"

"Co-o-ol," the child repeated in a louder voice, lengthening out the word with a fixed look and great emphasis, as much as to say, "What's the use of your having grown up, if you're such a donkey as not to understand me?"

"School, school," said Barbox Brothers. "Yes, yes, Phœbe teaches you?"

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weather turned cold and wet again, and the window was never open.

III

At length, after a lapse of some days, there came another streak of fine bright hardy autumn weather. It was a Saturday. The window was open, and the children were gone. Not surprising, this, for he had patiently watched and waited at the corner until they *were* gone.

"Good day," he said to the face, absolutely getting his hat clear off his head this time.

"Good day to you, sir."

"I am glad you have a fine sky again to look at."

"Thank you, sir. It is kind of you."

"You are an invalid, I fear?"

"No, sir. I have very good health."

"But are you not always lying down?"

"Oh, yes, I am always lying down, because I cannot sit up! But I am not an invalid."

The laughing eyes seemed highly to enjoy his great mistake.

"Would you mind taking the trouble to come in, sir? There is a beautiful view from this window. And you would see that I am not at all ill — being so good as to care."

It was said to help him, as he stood irresolute, but evidently desiring to enter, with his diffident hand on the latch of the garden gate. It did help him, and he went in.

The room up stairs was a very clean white room with a low roof. Its only inmate lay on a couch that brought her face to a level with the window. The couch was white too; and her simple dress or wrapper being light blue, like the band around her hair, she had an ethereal look, and a fanciful appearance of lying among clouds. He felt that she instinctively perceived him to be by habit a downcast taciturn man; it was another help to him to have established that understanding so easily, and got it over.

There was an awkward constraint upon him, nevertheless, as he touched her hand, and took a chair at the side of her couch.

"I see now," he began, not at all fluently, "how you occupy your hands. Only seeing you from the path outside, I thought you were playing upon something."

She was engaged in very nimbly and dexterously making
A lace-pillow lay upon her breast; and the quick movem
and changes of her hands upon it, as she worked, had g
them the action he had misinterpreted.

"That is curious," she answered, with a bright smile. "
I often fancy, myself, that I play tunes while I am at work

"Have you any musical knowledge?"

She shook her head.

"I think I could pick out tunes, if I had any instrum
which could be made as handy to me as my lace-pillow. B
dare say I deceive myself. At all events, I shall never kn

"You have a musical voice. Excuse me; I have heard
sing."

"With the children?" she answered, slightly colou
"Oh, yes! I sing with the dear children, if it can be c
singing."

Barbox Brothers glanced at the two small forms in the r
and hazarded the speculation that she was fond of children,
that she was learned in new systems of teaching them?

"Very fond of them," she said, shaking her head ag
"but I know nothing of teaching, beyond the interest I ha
it, and the pleasure it gives me when they learn. Per
your overhearing my little scholars sing some of their les
has led you so far astray as to think me a grand teacher?
I thought so! No, I have only read and been told about
system. It seemed so pretty and pleasant, and to treat the
like the merry Robins they are, that I took up with it in
little way. You don't need to be told what a very little
mine is, sir," she added, with a glance at the small f
round the room.

All this time her hands were busy at her lace-pillow
they still continued so, and as there was a kind of subst
for conversation in the click and play of its pegs, Ba
Brothers took the opportunity of observing her. He gu
her to be thirty. The charm of her transparent face and
bright brown eyes was, not that they were passively resig
but that they were actively and thoroughly cheerful. Eve
busy hands, which of their own thinness alone might
besought compassion, plied their task with a gay courage
made mere com[illegible] an [illegible] assumption of s
ority, and an [illegible] one.

He saw her eyes in the act of rising towards his, and he directed his towards the prospect, saying, "Beautiful indeed!"

"Most beautiful, sir. I have sometimes had a fancy that I would like to sit up, for once, only to try how it looks to an erect head. But what a foolish fancy that would be to encourage! It cannot look more lovely to any one than it does to me."

Her eyes were turned to it, as she spoke, with most delighted admiration and enjoyment. There was not a trace in it of any sense of deprivation.

"And those threads of railway, with their puffs of smoke and steam changing places so fast, make it so lively for me," she went on. "I think of the number of people who *can* go where they wish, on their business, or their pleasure; I remember that the puffs make signs to me that they are actually going while I look; and that enlivens the prospect with abundance of company, if I want company. There is the great Junction, too. I don't see it under the foot of the hill, but I can very often hear it, and I always know it is there. It seems to join me, in a way, to I don't know how many places and things that *I* shall never see."

With an abashed kind of idea that it might have already joined himself to something he had never seen, he said constrainedly, "Just so."

"And so you see, sir," pursued Phœbe, "I am not the invalid you thought me, and I am very well off indeed."

"You have a happy disposition," said Barbox Brothers; perhaps with a slight excusatory touch for his own disposition.

"Ah! But you should know my father," she replied. "His is the happy disposition! — Don't mind, sir!" For his reserve took the alarm at a step upon the stairs, and he distrusted that he would be set down for a troublesome intruder. "This is my father coming."

The door opened, and the father paused there.

"Why, Lamps!" exclaimed Barbox Brothers, starting from his chair. "How do you DO, Lamps?"

[illegible] which Lamps responded, "The gentleman for Nowhere! [illegible] you DO, sir?"

[illegible] shook hands, to the greatest admiration and sur-[illegible]'s daughter.

"I have looked you up half a dozen times since that night," said Barbox Brothers, "but have never found you."

"So I've heerd on, sir, so I've heerd on," returned Lamps. "It's your being noticed so often down at the Junction, without taking any train, that has begun to get you the name among us of the gentleman for Nowhere. No offence in my having called you by it when took by surprise, I hope, sir?"

"None at all. It's as good a name for me as any other you could call me by. But may I ask you a question in the corner here?"

Lamps suffered himself to be led aside from his daughter's couch by one of the buttons of his velveteen jacket.

"Is this the bedside where you sing your songs?"

Lamps nodded.

The gentleman for Nowhere clapped him on the shoulder, and they faced about again.

"Upon my word, my dear," said Lamps then to his daughter, looking from her to her visitor, "it is such an amaze to me to find you brought acquainted with this gentleman that I must (if this gentleman will excuse me) take a rounder."

Mr. Lamps demonstrated in action what this meant by pulling out his oily handkerchief rolled up in the form of a ball, and giving himself an elaborate smear, from behind the right ear, up the cheek, across the forehead, and down the other cheek to behind his left ear. After this operation he shone exceedingly.

"It's according to my custom when particular warmed up by any agitation, sir," he offered by way of apology. "And really I am throwed into that state of amaze by finding you brought acquainted with Phœbe, that I — that I think I will, if you'll excuse me, take another rounder." Which he did, seeming to be greatly restored by it.

They were now both standing by the side of her couch, and she was working at her lace-pillow. "Your daughter tells me," said Barbox Brothers, still in a half-reluctant, shamefaced way, "that she never sits up."

"No, sir, nor never has done. You see, her mother (who died when she was a year and two months old) was subject to very bad fits, and, as she had never mentioned to me that she was subj[illegible] fits, they couldn't be guarded against. Consequently [illegible] took, and this happened."

"It was very wrong of her," said Barbox Brothers with a knitted brow, "to marry you, making a secret of her infirmity."

"Well, sir," pleaded Lamps in behalf of the long-deceased. "You see, Phœbe and me, we have talked that over too. And Lord bless us! Such a number on us has our infirmities, what with fits, and what with misfits, of one sort and another, that if we confessed to 'em all before we got married, most of us might never get married."

"Might not that be for the better?"

"Not in this case, sir," said Phœbe, giving her hand to her father.

"No, not in this case, sir," said her father, patting it between his own.

"You correct me," returned Barbox Brothers with a blush; "and I must look so like a Brute that at all events it would be superfluous in me to confess to *that* infirmity. I wish you would tell me a little more about yourselves. I hardly know how to ask it of you, for I am conscious that I have a bad stiff manner, a dull, discouraging way with me, but I wish you would."

"With all our hearts, sir," returned Lamps gaily for both. "And first of all, that you may know my name —"

"Stay!" interposed the visitor with a slight flush. "What signifies your name? Lamps is name enough for me. I like it. It is bright and expressive. What do I want more?"

"Why, to be sure, sir," returned Lamps. "I have in general no other name down at the Junction; but I thought, on account of your being here as a first-class single, in a private character, that you might —"

The visitor waved the thought away with his hand, and Lamps acknowledged the mark of confidence by taking another rounder.

"You are hard-worked, I take for granted?" said Barbox Brothers, when the subject of the rounder came out of it much dirtier than he went into it.

Lamps was beginning, "Not particular so —" when his daughter took him up.

"Oh, yes, sir, he is very hard-worked! Fourteen, fifteen, hours a day. Sometimes twenty-four hours at a

"And you," said Barbox Brothers, "what with your sch
Phœbe, and what with your lace-making —"

"But my school is a pleasure to me," she interrupted, sp
ing her brown eyes wider, as if surprised to find him so dim
"I began it when I was but a child, because it brought me a
other children into company, don't you see? *That* was
work. I carry it on still, because it keeps children about
That is not work. I do it as love, not as work. Then
lace-pillow," — her busy hands had stopped, as if her argum
required all her cheerful earnestness, but now went on agai
the name, — "it goes with my thoughts when I think, and
goes with my tunes when I hum any, and *that*'s not wo
Why, you yourself thought it was music, you know, sir. A
so it is to me."

"Everything is!" cried Lamps radiantly. "Everything
music to her, sir."

"My father is, at any rate," said Phœbe, exultingly point
her thin forefinger at him. "There is more music in my fat
than there is in a brass band."

"I say! My dear! It's very fillyillially done, you kn
but you are flattering your father," he protested, sparkling

"No, I am not, sir, I assure you. No, I am not. If y
could hear my father sing, you would know I am not. But y
never will hear him sing, because he never sings to any
but me. However tired he is, he always sings to me when
comes home. When I lay here long ago, quite a poor li
broken doll, he used to sing to me. More than that, he u
to make songs, bringing in whatever little jokes we had betw
us. More than that, he often does so to this day. Oh! I
tell of you, father, as the gentleman has asked about you.
is a poet, sir."

"I should n't wish the gentleman, my dear," obser
Lamps, for the moment turning grave, "to carry away t
opinion of your father, because it might look as if I was gi
to asking the stars in a molloncolly manner what they wa
to. Which I would n't at once waste the time, and take
liberty, my dear."

"My father," resumed Phœbe, amending her text,
alw the bright side, and the good side. You told
ju ad a ha osition. How can I help it?"

il, returned Lamps argumentativ

"how can *I* help it? Put it to yourself, sir. Look at her. Always as you see her now. Always working — and after all, sir, for but a very few shillings a week — always contented, always lively, always interested in others, of all sorts. I said, this moment, she was always as you see her now. So she is, with a difference that comes to much the same. For when it's my Sunday off and the morning bells have done ringing, I hear the prayers and thanks read in the touchingest way, and I have the hymns sung to me — so soft, sir, that you could n't hear 'em out of this room — in notes that seem to me, I am sure, to come from Heaven and go back to it."

It might have been merely through the association of these words with their sacredly quiet time, or it might have been through the larger association of the words with the Redeemer's presence beside the bedridden; but here her dexterous fingers came to a stop on the lace-pillow, and clasped themselves around his neck as he bent down. There was great natural sensibility in both father and daughter, the visitor could easily see; but each made it, for the other's sake, retiring, not demonstrative; and perfect cheerfulness, intuitive or acquired, was either the first or second nature of both. In a very few moments Lamps was taking another rounder with his comical features beaming, while Phœbe's laughing eyes (just a glistening speck or so upon their lashes) were again directed by turns to him, and to her work, and to Barbox Brothers.

"When my father, sir," she said brightly, "tells you about my being interested in other people, even though they know nothing about me, — which, by the bye, I told you myself, — you ought to know how that comes about. That's my father's doing."

"No, it is n't!" he protested.

"Don't you believe him, sir; yes, it is. He tells me of everything he sees down at his work. You would be surprised what a quantity he gets together for me every day. He looks into the carriages, and tells me how the ladies are dressed — so that I know all the fashions! He looks into the carriages, and tells me what pairs of lovers he sees, and what new-married couples on their wedding trip — so that I know all about that! He collects chance newspapers and books — so that I have plenty to read! He tells me about the sick people who are travelling to try to get better — so that I know all about them!

In short, as I began by saying, he tells me everything he sees and makes out down at his work, and you can't think what a quantity he does see and make out."

"As to collecting newspapers and books, my dear," said Lamps, "it's clear I can have no merit in that, because they're not my perquisites. You see, sir, it's this way: A Guard, he'll say to me, 'Halloa, here you are, Lamps. I've saved this paper for your daughter. How is she a going on?' A Head-Porter, he'll say to me, 'Here! catch hold, Lamps. Here's a couple of wollumes for your daughter. Is she pretty much where she were?' And that's what makes it double welcome, you see. If she had a thousand pound in a box, they wouldn't trouble themselves about her; but being what she is — that is, you understand," Lamps added, somewhat hurriedly, "not having a thousand pound in a box — they take thought for her. And as concerning the young pairs, married and unmarried, it's only natural I should bring home what little I can about them, seeing that there's not a couple of either sort in the neighbourhood that don't come of their own accord to confide in Phœbe."

She raised her eyes triumphantly to Barbox Brothers as she said: —

"Indeed, sir, that is true. If I could have got up and gone to church, I don't know how often I should have been a bridesmaid. But if I could have done that, some girls in love might have been jealous of me, and, as it is, no girl is jealous of me. And my pillow would not have been half as ready to put the piece of cake under, as I always find it," she added, turning her face on it with a light sigh, and a smile at her father.

The arrival of a little girl, the biggest of the scholars, now led to an understanding on the part of Barbox Brothers, that she was the domestic of the cottage, and had come to take active measures in it, attended by a pail that might have extinguished her, and a broom three times her height. He therefore rose to take his leave, and took it; saying that if Phœbe had no objection he would come again.

He had muttered that he would come "in the course of his walks." The course of his walks must have been highly favourable to his return, for he returned after an interval of a single day.

"You thought you would never see me any more, I suppose?" he said to Phœbe as he touched her hand, and sat down by her couch.

hy should I think so?" was her surprised rejoinder.
ook it for granted you would mistrust me."
r granted, sir? Have you been so much mistrusted?"
hink I am justified in answering, yes. But I may have
ted, too, on my part. No matter just now. We were
g of the Junction last time. I have passed hours there
e day before yesterday."
you now the gentleman for Somewhere?" she asked
smile.
tainly for Somewhere; but I don't yet know Where.
uld never guess what I am travelling from. Shall I
? I am travelling from my birthday."
hands stopped in her work, and she looked at him with
lous astonishment.
s," said Barbox Brothers, not quite easy in his chair,
my birthday. I am, to myself, an unintelligible book
e earlier chapters all torn out, and thrown away. My
od had no grace of childhood, my youth had no charm of
and what can be expected from such a lost beginning?"
s meeting hers as they were addressed intently to him,
ng seemed to stir within his breast, whispering: "Was
l a place for the graces of childhood and the charms of
o take to kindly? Oh, shame, shame!"
is a disease with me," said Barbox Brothers, checking
, and making as though he had a difficulty in swallowing
ng, "to go wrong about that. I don't know how I
speak of that. I hope it is because of an old misplaced
nce in one of your sex involving an old bitter treachery.
know. I am all wrong together."
hands quietly and slowly resumed their work. Glancing
he saw that her eyes were thoughtfully following them.
m travelling from my birthday," he resumed, "because
lways been a dreary day to me. My first free birthday
round some five or six weeks hence, I am travelling to
predecessors far behind me, and to try to crush the day
t all events, put it out of my sight — by heaping new
on it."
e paused, she looked at him; but only shook her head
g quite at a loss.
is is unintelligible to your happy disposition," he pur-
ing by his former phrase as if there were some

lingering virtue of self-defence in it. "I know it w[illegible] am glad it is. However, on this travel of [illegible] mean to pass the rest of my days, having aband[illegible] of a fixed home, I stopped, as you heard [illegible] at the Junction here. The extent of its [illegible] confused me as to whither I should go, fr[illegible] yet settled, being still perplexed among [illegible] do you think I mean to do? How many [illegible] roads can you see from your window?"

Looking out, full of interest, she answered, "[illegible]

"Seven," said Barbox Brothers, watching her w[illegible] smile. "Well! I propose to myself at once [illegible] gross number to those very seven, and [illegible] down to one — the most promising for me [illegible]

"But how will you know, sir, which is the [illegible] she asked, with her brightened eyes roving over [illegible]

"Ah!" said Barbox Brothers with another gr[illegible] considerably improving in his ease of speech. "I [illegible] this way. W[illegible]

[illegible]

covered."

She gave him he[illegible] right hand, in perfect rapt[illegible] with his proposal, [illegible] and [illegible]lly thanked him.

"That's well!" said Barbox Brothers. "Again I must not forget (having got so far) to ask a favour. Will you shut your eyes?"

Laughing playfully at the strange nature of the request, she did so.

"Keep them shut," said Barbox Brothers, going softly to the door, and coming back. "You are on your honour, mind, not to open your eyes until I tell you that you may?"

"Yes! On my honour."

"Good. May I take your lace-pillow from you for a minute?"

Still laughing and wondering, she removed her hands from it, and he put it aside.

"Tell me. Did you see the puffs of smoke and steam made by the morning fast-train yesterday on road number seven from here?"

"Behind the elm-trees and the spire?"

"That's the road," said Barbox Brothers, directing his eyes towards it.

"Yes. I watched them melt away."

"Anything unusual in what they expressed?"

"No!" she answered merrily.

"Not complimentary to me, for I was in that train. I went — don't open your eyes — to fetch you this from the great ingenious town. It is not half so large as your lace-pillow, and lies easily and lightly in its place. These little keys are like the keys of a miniature piano, and you supply the air required with your left hand. May you pick out delightful music from it, my dear! For the present — you can open your eyes now — good-bye!"

In his embarrassed way, he closed the door upon himself, and only saw, in doing so, that she ecstatically took the present to her bosom and caressed it. The glimpse gladdened his heart, and yet saddened it; for so might she, if her youth had flourished in its natural course, have taken to her breast that day the slumbering music of her own child's voice.

CHAPTER II

BARBOX BROTHERS AND CO.

With good-will and earnest purpose, the gentleman for Nowhere began, on the very next day, his researches at the heads of the seven roads. The results of his researches, as he and Phœbe afterwards set them down in fair writing, hold their due places in this veracious chronicle. But they occupied a much longer time in the getting together than they ever will in the perusal. And this is probably the case with most reading matter, except when it is of that highly beneficial kind (for Posterity) which is "thrown off in a few moments of leisure" by the superior poetic geniuses who scorn to take prose pains.

It must be admitted, however, that Barbox by no means hurried himself. His heart being in his work of good-nature, he revelled in it. There was the joy, too (it was a true joy to him), of sometimes sitting by, listening to Phœbe as she picked out more and more discourse from her musical instrument, and as her natural taste and ear refined daily upon her first discoveries. Besides being a pleasure, this was an occupation, and in the course of weeks it consumed hours. It resulted that his dreaded birthday was close upon him before he had troubled himself any more about it.

The matter was made more pressing by the unforeseen circumstance that the councils held (at which Mr. Lamps, beaming most brilliantly, on a few rare occasions assisted) respecting the road to be selected were, after all, in nowise assisted by his investigations. For he had connected this interest with this road, or that interest with the other, but could deduce no reason from it for giving any road the preference. Consequently, when the last council was holden, that part of the business stood, in the end, exactly where it had stood in the beginning.

"But, sir," remarked Phœbe, "we have only six roads after all. Is the seventh road dumb?"

"The seventh road? Oh!" said Barbox Brothers, rubbing his chin. "That is the road I took, you know, when I went to get your little present. That is *its* story, Phœbe."

"Would you mind taking that road again, sir?" she asked with hesitation.

"Not in the least; it is a great high-road after all."

"I should like you to take it," returned Phœbe, with a persuasive smile, "for the love of that little present which must ever be so dear to me. I should like you to take it, because that road can never be again like any other road to me. I should like you to take it, in remembrance of your having done me so much good, of your having made me so much happier! If you leave me by the road you travelled when you went to do me this great kindness," sounding a faint chord as she spoke, "I shall feel, lying here watching at my window, as if it must conduct you to a prosperous end, and bring you back some day."

"It shall be done, my dear; it shall be done."

So at last the gentleman for Nowhere took a ticket for Somewhere, and his destination was the great ingenious town.

He had loitered so long about the Junction that it was the eighteenth of December when he left it. "High time," he reflected, as he seated himself in the train, "that I started in earnest! Only one clear day remains between me and the day I am running away from. I'll push onward for the hill-country to-morrow. I'll go to Wales."

It was with some pains that he placed before himself the undeniable advantages to be gained in the way of novel occupation for his senses from misty mountains, swollen streams, rain, cold, a wild seashore, and rugged roads. And yet he scarcely made them out as distinctly as he could have wished. Whether the poor girl, in spite of her new resource, her music, would have any feeling of loneliness upon her now — just at first — that she had not had before; whether she saw those very puffs of steam and smoke that he saw, as he sat in the train thinking of her; whether her face would have any pensive shadow on it as they died out of the distant view from her window; whether, in telling him he had done her so much good, she had not unconsciously corrected his old moody bemoaning of his station in life, by setting him thinking that a man might be a great healer, if he would, and yet not be a great doctor; these and other similar meditations got between him and his Welsh picture. There was within him, too, that dull sense of vacuity which follows separation from an object of interest, and cessation of a pleasant pursuit; and this sense, being quite new to him, made him restless. Further, in losing Mugby Junction, he had found

himself again; and he was not the more enamoured of himself for having lately passed his time in better company.

But surely here, not far ahead, must be the great ingenious town. This crashing and clashing that the train was undergoing, and this coupling on to it of a multitude of new echoes, could mean nothing less than approach to the great station. It did mean nothing less. After some stormy flashes of town lightning, in the way of swift revelations of red brick blocks of houses, high red brick chimney-shafts, vistas of red brick railway arches, tongues of fire, blocks of smoke, valleys of canal, and hills of coal, there came the thundering in at the journey's end.

Having seen his portmanteaus safely housed in the hotel he chose, and having appointed his dinner hour, Barbox Brothers went out for a walk in the busy streets. And now it began to be suspected by him that Mugby Junction was a Junction of many branches, invisible as well as visible, and had joined him to an endless number of byways. For whereas he would, but a little while ago, have walked these streets blindly brooding, he now had eyes and thoughts for a new external world. How the many toiling people lived, and loved, and died; how wonderful it was to consider the various trainings of eye and hand, the nice distinctions of sight and touch, that separated them into classes of workers, and even into classes of workers at subdivisions of one complete whole which combined their many intelligences and forces, though of itself but some cheap object of use or ornament in common life; how good it was to know that such assembling in a multitude on their part, and such contribution of their several dexterities towards a civilising end, did not deteriorate them as it was the fashion of the supercilious Mayflies of humanity to pretend, but engendered among them a self-respect, and yet a modest desire to be much wiser than they were (the first evinced in their well-balanced bearing and manner of speech when he stopped to ask a question; the second, in the announcements of their popular studies and amusements on the public walls); these considerations, and a host of such, made his walk a memorable one. "I too am but a little part of a great whole," he began to think; "and to be serviceable to myself and others, or to be happy, I must cast my interest into, and draw it out of, the common stock."

Although he had arrived at his journey's end for the day by

noon, he had since insensibly walked about the town so far and so long that the lamp-lighters were now at their work in the streets, and the shops were sparkling up brilliantly. Thus reminded to turn towards his quarters, he was in the act of doing so, when a very little hand crept into his, and a very little voice said: —

"Oh! If you please, I am lost!"

He looked down and saw a very little fair-haired girl.

"Yes," she said, confirming her words with a serious nod. "I am indeed. I am lost!"

Greatly perplexed, he stopped, looked about him for help, descried none, and said, bending low: —

"Where do you live, my child?"

"I don't know where I live," she returned. "I am lost."

"What is your name?"

"Polly."

"What is your other name?"

The reply was prompt, but unintelligible.

Imitating the sound as he caught it, he hazarded the guess, "Trivits?"

"Oh, no!" said the child, shaking her head. "Nothing like that."

"Say it again, little one."

An unpromising business. For this time it had quite a different sound.

He made the venture, "Paddens?"

"Oh, no!" said the child. "Nothing like that."

"Once more. Let us try it again, dear."

A most hopeless business. This time it swelled into four syllables. "It can't be Tappitarver?" said Barbox Brothers, rubbing his head with his hat in discomfiture.

"No! It ain't," the child quietly assented.

On her trying this unfortunate name once more, with extraordinary efforts at distinctness, it swelled into eight syllables at least.

"Ah! I think," said Barbox Brothers, with a desperate air of resignation, "that we had better give it up."

"But I am lost," said the child, nestling her little hand more closely in his, "and you'll take care of me, won't you?"

If ever a man were disconcerted by division between compassion on the one hand and the very imbecility of irresolution on

the other, here the man was. "Lost!" he repeated, looking down at the child. "I am sure *I* am. What is to be done?"

"Where do you live?" asked the child, looking up at him wistfully.

"Over there," he answered, pointing vaguely in the direction of his hotel.

"Had n't we better go there?" said the child.

"Really," he replied, "I don't know but what we had."

So they set off, hand in hand. He, through comparison of himself against his little companion, with a clumsy feeling on him as if he had just developed into a foolish giant. She, clearly elevated in her own tiny opinion by having got him so neatly out of his embarrassment.

"We are going to have dinner when we get there, I suppose?" said Polly.

"Well," he rejoined, "I — Yes, I suppose we are."

"Do you like your dinner?" asked the child.

"Why, on the whole," said Barbox Brothers, "yes, I think I do."

"I do mine," said Polly. "Have you any brothers and sisters?"

"No. Have you?"

"Mine are dead."

"Oh!" said Barbox Brothers. With that absurd sense of unwieldiness of mind and body weighing him down, he would have not known how to pursue the conversation beyond this curt rejoinder, but that the child was always ready for him.

"What," she asked, turning her soft hand coaxingly in his, "are you going to do to amuse me after dinner?"

"Upon my soul, Polly," exclaimed Barbox Brothers, very much at a loss, "I have not the slightest idea!"

"Then I tell you what," said Polly. "Have you got any cards at your house?"

"Plenty," said Barbox Brothers in a boastful vein.

"Very well. Then I'll build houses, and you shall look at me. You must n't blow, you know."

"Oh, no!" said Barbox Brothers. "No, no, no. No blowing. Blowing's not fair."

He flattered himself that he had said this pretty well for an idiotic monster; but the child, instantly perceiving the awkwardness of his attempt to adapt himself to her level, utterly

destroyed his hopeful opinion of himself by saying compassionately, "What a funny man you are!"

Feeling, after this melancholy failure, as if he every minute grew bigger and heavier in person, and weaker in mind, Barbox gave himself up for a bad job. No giant ever submitted more meekly to be led in triumph by all-conquering Jack than he to be bound in slavery to Polly.

"Do you know any stories?" she asked him.

He was reduced to the humiliating confession, "No."

"What a dunce you must be, must n't you?" said Polly.

He was reduced to the humiliating confession, "Yes."

"Would you like me to teach you a story? But you must remember it, you know, and be able to tell it right to somebody else afterwards."

He professed that it would afford him the highest mental gratification to be taught a story, and that he would humbly endeavour to retain it in his mind. Whereupon Polly, giving her hand a new little turn in his, expressive of settling down for enjoyment, commenced a long romance, of which every relishing clause began with the words, "So this," or, "And so this." As, "So this boy;" or, "So this fairy;" or, "And so this pie was four yards round, and two yards and a quarter deep." The interest of the romance was derived from the intervention of this fairy to punish this boy for having a greedy appetite. To achieve which purpose, this fairy made this pie, and this boy ate and ate and ate, and his cheeks swelled and swelled and swelled. There were many tributary circumstances, but the forcible interest culminated in the total consumption of this pie, and the bursting of this boy. Truly he was a fine sight, Barbox Brothers, with serious attentive face, and ear bent down, much jostled on the pavements of the busy town, but afraid of losing a single incident of the epic, lest he should be examined in it by and by, and found deficient.

Thus they arrived at the hotel. And there he had to say at the bar, and said awkwardly enough, "I have found a little girl!"

The whole establishment turned out to look at the little girl. Nobody knew her; nobody could make out her name, as she set ... except one chambermaid, who said it was Constanti- ... it was n't.

... with my young friend in a private room," said

Barbox Brothers to the hotel authorities, "and perhaps you will be so good as to let the police know that the pretty baby is here. I suppose she is sure to be inquired for soon, if she has not been already. Come along, Polly."

Perfectly at ease and peace, Polly came along, but, finding the stairs rather stiff work, was carried up by Barbox Brothers. The dinner was a most transcendent success, and the Barbox sheepishness, under Polly's directions how to mince her meat for her, and how to diffuse gravy over the plate with a liberal and equal hand, was another fine sight.

"And now," said Polly, "while we are at dinner, you be good, and tell me that story I taught you."

With the tremors of a Civil Service examination on him, and very uncertain indeed, not only as to the epoch at which the pie appeared in history, but also as to the measurements of that indispensable fact, Barbox Brothers made a shaky beginning, but under encouragement did very fairly. There was a want of breadth observable in his rendering of the cheeks, as well as the appetite, of the boy; and there was a certain tameness in his fairy, referable to an under-current of desire to account for her. Still, as the first lumbering performance of a good-humoured monster, it passed muster.

"I told you to be good," said Polly, "and you are good, ain't you?"

"I hope so," replied Barbox Brothers.

Such was his deference that Polly, elevated on a platform of sofa cushions in a chair at his right hand, encouraged him with a pat or two on the face from the greasy bowl of her spoon, and even with a gracious kiss. In getting on her feet upon her chair, however, to give him this last reward, she toppled forward among the dishes, and caused him to exclaim as he effected her rescue, "Gracious Angels! Whew! I thought we were in the fire, Polly!"

"What a coward you are, ain't you?" said Polly, when replaced.

"Yes, I am rather nervous," he replied. "Whew! Don't, Polly. Don't flourish your spoon, or you'll go over sideways. Don't tilt up your legs when you laugh, Polly, or you'll go over backwards. Whew! Polly, Polly, Polly," said Barbox Brothers, nearly succumbing to despair, "we are environed with dangers."

Indeed, he could descry no security from the pitfalls that were yawning for Polly, but in proposing to her, after dinner, to sit upon a low stool. "I will, if you will," said Polly. So, as peace of mind should go before all, he begged the waiter to wheel aside the table, bring a pack of cards, a couple of footstools, and a screen, and close in Polly and himself before the fire, as it were in a snug room within the room. Then, finest sight of all, was Barbox Brothers on his footstool, with a pint decanter on the rug, contemplating Polly as she built successfully, and growing blue in the face with holding his breath, lest he should blow the house down.

"How you stare, don't you?" said Polly in a houseless pause.

Detected in the ignoble fact, he felt obliged to admit, apologetically: "I am afraid I was looking rather hard at you, Polly."

"Why do you stare?" asked Polly.

"I cannot," he murmured to himself, "recall why. — I don't know, Polly."

"You must be a simpleton to do things and not know why, must n't you?" said Polly.

In spite of which reproof, he looked at the child again intently, as she bent her head over her card structure, her rich curls shading her face. "It is impossible," he thought, "that I can ever have seen this pretty baby before. Can I have dreamed of her? In some sorrowful dream?"

He could make nothing of it. So he went into the building trade as a journeyman under Polly, and they built three stories high, four stories high; even five.

"I say! Who do you think is coming?" asked Polly, rubbing her eyes after tea.

He guessed: "The waiter?"

"No," said Polly, "the dustman. I am getting sleepy."

A new embarrassment for Barbox Brothers!

"I don't think I am going to be fetched to-night," said Polly. "What do you think?"

He thought not, either. After another quarter of an hour, the dustman not merely impending, but actually arriving, recourse was had to the Constantinopolitan chambermaid, who [illegible] undertook that the child should sleep in a comfortable [illegible] room, which she herself would share.

"And I know you will be careful, won't you," said Barbox Brothers, as a new fear dawned upon him, "that she don't fall out of bed?"

Polly found this so highly entertaining that she was under the necessity of clutching him round the neck with both arms as he sat on his footstool picking up the cards, and rocking him to and fro, with her dimpled chin on his shoulder.

"Oh, what a coward you are, ain't you?" said Polly. "Do you fall out of bed?"

"N—not generally, Polly."

"No more do I."

With that, Polly gave him a reassuring hug or two to keep him going, and then giving that confiding mite of a hand of hers to be swallowed up in the hand of the Constantinopolitan chambermaid, trotted off, chattering, without a vestige of anxiety.

He looked after her, had the screen removed, and the table and chairs replaced, and still looked after her. He paced the room for half an hour. "A most engaging little creature, but it's not that. A most winning little voice, but it's not that. That has much to do with it, but there is something more. How can it be that I seem to know this child? What was it she imperfectly recalled to me when I felt her touch in the street, and, looking down at her, saw her looking up at me?"

"Mr. Jackson!"

With a start he turned towards the sound of the subdued voice, and saw his answer standing at the door.

"Oh, Mr. Jackson, do not be severe with me! Speak a word of encouragement to me, I beseech you."

"You are Polly's mother."

"Yes."

Yes. Polly herself might come to this, one day. As you see what the rose was in its faded leaves; as you see what the summer growth of the woods was in their wintry branches, so Polly might be traced, one day, in a careworn woman like this, with her hair turned grey. Before him were the ashes of a dead fire that had once burned bright. This was the woman he had loved. This was the woman he had lost. Such had been the constancy of his imagination to her, so had Time spared her under its withholding, that now, seeing how roughly the inexorable hand had struck her, his soul was filled with pity and amazement.

He led hei to a chair, and stood leaning on a corner of the chimney-piece, with his head resting on his hand, and his face half averted.

"Did you see me in the street, and show me to your child?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Is the little creature, then, a party to deceit?"

"I hope there is no deceit. I said to her, 'We have lost our way, and I must try to find mine by myself. Go to that gentleman, and tell him you are lost. You shall be fetched by and by.' Perhaps you have not thought how very young she is?"

"She is very self-reliant."

"Perhaps because she is so young."

He asked after a short pause, "Why did you do this?"

"Oh, Mr. Jackson, do you ask me? In the hope that you might see something in my innocent child to soften your heart towards me. Not only towards me, but towards my husband."

He suddenly turned about, and walked to the opposite end of the room. He came back again with a slower step, and resumed his former attitude, saying: —

"I thought you had emigrated to America?"

"We did. But life went ill with us there, and we came back."

"Do you live in this town?"

"Yes. I am a daily teacher of music here. My husband is a book-keeper."

"Are you — forgive my asking — poor?"

"We earn enough for our wants. That is not our distress. My husband is very, very ill of a lingering disorder. He will never recover — "

"You check yourself. If it is for want of the encouraging word you spoke of, take it from me. I cannot forget the old time, Beatrice."

"God bless you!" she replied with a burst of tears, and gave him her trembling hand.

"Compose yourself. I cannot be composed if you are not, for to see you weep distresses me beyond expression. Speak freely to me. Trust me."

She shaded her face with her veil, and after a little while spoke calmly. Her voice had the ring of Polly's.

"It is not that my husband's mind is at all impaired by bodily suffering, for I assure you that is not the case. But his weakness, and in his knowledge that he is incurably ill, cannot overcome the ascendancy of one idea. It preys up him, embitters every moment of his painful life, and w shorten it."

She stopping, he said again: "Speak freely to me. Tr me."

"We have had five children before this darling, and they lie in their little graves. He believes that they have withe away under a curse, and that it will blight this child like t rest."

"Under what curse?"

"Both I and he have it on our conscience that we tried y very heavily, and I do not know but that, if I were as ill as I I might suffer in my mind as he does. This is the consta burden: 'I believe, Beatrice, I was the only friend that J Jackson ever cared to make, though I was so much his jun The more influence he acquired in the business, the higher advanced me, and I was alone in his private confidence came between him and you, and I took you from him. W were both secret, and the blow fell when he was wholly unpr pared. The anguish it caused a man so compressed must ha been terrible; the wrath it awakened inappeasable. S curse came to be invoked on our poor pretty little flowers, a they fall!'"

"And you, Beatrice," he asked, when she had ceased speak, and there had been a silence afterwards — "how a you?"

"Until within these few weeks I was afraid of you, an believed that you would never, never forgive."

"Until within these few weeks," he repeated. "Have y changed your opinion of me within these few weeks?"

"Yes."

"For what reason?"

"I was getting some pieces of music in a shop in this tow when, to my terror, you came in. As I veiled my face a stood in the dark end of the shop, I heard you explain th you wanted a musical instrument for a bedridden girl. Yo voice and manner were so softened, you showed such interest its selection, you took it away yourself with so much tenderne

of care and pleasure, that I knew you were a man with a most gentle heart. O Mr. Jackson, Mr. Jackson, if you could have felt the refreshing rain of tears that followed for me!"

Was Phœbe playing at that moment on her distant couch? He seemed to hear her.

"I inquired in the shop where you lived, but could get no information. As I had heard you say that you were going back by the next train (but you did not say where), I resolved to visit the station at about that time of day, as often as I could, between my lessons, on the chance of seeing you again. I have been there very often, but saw you no more until to-day. You were meditating as you walked the street, but the calm expression of your face emboldened me to send my child to you. And when I saw you bend your head to speak tenderly to her, I prayed to God to forgive me for having ever brought a sorrow on it. I now pray to you to forgive me, and to forgive my husband. I was very young, he was young, too, and, in the ignorant hardihood of such a time of life, we don't know what we do to those who have undergone more discipline. You generous man! You good man! So to raise me up and make nothing of my crime against you!" — for he would not see her on her knees, and soothed her as a kind father might have soothed an erring daughter — "thank you, bless you, thank you!"

When he next spoke, it was after having drawn aside the window curtain and looked out awhile. Then he only said: —

"Is Polly asleep?"

"Yes. As I came in, I met her going away up stairs, and put her to bed myself."

"Leave her with me for to-morrow, Beatrice, and write me your address on this leaf of my pocket-book. In the evening I will bring her home to you — and to her father."

. . . .

"Hallo!" cried Polly, putting her saucy, sunny face in at the door next morning when breakfast was ready; "I thought I was fetched last night?"

"So you were, Polly, but I asked leave to keep you here for the day, and to take you home in the evening."

"Upon my word!" said Polly. "You are very cool, ain't

Polly seemed to think it a good idea, and added:

"I suppose I must give you a kiss, though you are cool."

The kiss given and taken, they sat down to breakfast in highly conversational tone.

"Of course, you are going to amuse me?" said Polly.

"Oh, of course!" said Barbox Brothers.

In the pleasurable height of her anticipations, Polly found indispensable to put down her piece of toast, cross one of l little fat knees over the other, and bring her little fat ri hand down into her left hand with a business-like slap. A this gathering of herself together, Polly, by that time a m heap of dimples, asked in a wheedling manner: —

"What are we going to do, you dear old thing?"

"Why, I was thinking," said Barbox Brothers, "—but you fond of horses, Polly?"

"Ponies, I am," said Polly, "especially when their tails long. But horses — n—no — too big, you know."

"Well," pursued Barbox Brothers, in a spirit of grave, terious confidence adapted to the importance of the cons tion, "I did see yesterday, Polly, on the walls, pictures of long-tailed ponies, speckled all over —"

"No, no, NO!" cried Polly, in an ecstatic desire to li on the charming details. "Not speckled all over!"

"Speckled all over. Which ponies jump through hoops

"No, no, NO!" cried Polly as before. "They never j through hoops!"

"Yes, they do. Oh, I assure you they do! And eat p pinafores —"

"Ponies eating pie in pinafores!" said Polly. "Wh story-teller you are, ain't you?"

"Upon my honour. — And fire off guns."

(Polly hardly seemed to see the force of the ponies reso to firearms.)

"And I was thinking," pursued the exemplary Barbox, " if you and I were to go to the Circus where these ponies a would do our constitutions good."

"Does that mean amuse us?" inquired Polly. "W long words you do use, don't you?"

Apologetic for having wandered out of his depth, h plied: —

"That means amuse us. That is exactly what it m There are many other wonders besides the ponies, and we

see them all. Ladies and gentlemen in spangled dresses, and elephants and lions and tigers."

Polly became observant of the teapot, with a curled-up nose indicating some uneasiness of mind.

"They never get out, of course," she remarked as a mere truism.

"The elephants and lions and tigers? Oh dear no!"

"Oh dear no!" said Polly. "And of course nobody's afraid of the ponies shooting anybody."

"Not the least in the world."

"No, no, not the least in the world," said Polly.

"I was also thinking," proceeded Barbox, "that if we were to look in at the toy-shop, to choose a doll —"

"Not dressed!" cried Polly, with a clap of her hands. "No, no, NO, not dressed!"

"Full-dressed. Together with a house, and all things necessary for housekeeping —"

Polly gave a little scream, and seemed in danger of falling into a swoon of bliss.

"What a darling you are!" she languidly exclaimed, leaning back in her chair. "Come and be hugged, or I must come and hug you."

This resplendent programme was carried into execution with the utmost rigour of the law. It being essential to make the purchase of the doll its first feature, — or that lady would have lost the ponies, — the toy-shop expedition took precedence. Polly in the magic warehouse, with a doll as large as herself under each arm, and a neat assortment of some twenty more on view upon the counter, did indeed present a spectacle of indecision not quite compatible with unalloyed happiness, but the light cloud passed. The lovely specimen oftenest chosen, oftenest rejected, and finally abided by, was of Circassian descent, possessing as much boldness of beauty as was reconcilable with extreme feebleness of mouth, and combining a sky-blue silk pelisse with rose-coloured satin trousers, and a black velvet hat, which this fair stranger to our northern shores would seem to have founded on the portraits of the late Duchess of Kent. The name this distinguished foreigner brought with her from beneath the glowing skies of a sunny clime was (on Polly's authority) Miss Melluka, and the costly nature of her outfit as a housekeeper, from the Barbox coffers, may be inferred from

the two facts that her silver tea-spoons were as large as her kitchen poker, and that the proportions of her watch exceeded those of her frying-pan. Miss Melluka was graciously pleased to express her entire approbation of the Circus, and so was Polly; for the ponies *were* speckled, and brought down nobody when they fired, and the savagery of the wild beasts appeared to be mere smoke — which article, in fact, they did produce in large quantities from their insides. The Barbox absorption in the general subject throughout the realisation of these delights was again a sight to see, nor was it less worthy to behold at dinner, when he drank to Miss Melluka, tied stiff in a chair opposite to Polly (the fair Circassian possessing an unbending spine), and even induced the waiter to assist in carrying out with due decorum the prevailing glorious idea. To wind up, there came the agreeable fever of getting Miss Melluka and all her wardrobe and rich possessions into a fly with Polly, to be taken home. But, by that time, Polly had become unable to look upon such accumulated joys with waking eyes, and had withdrawn her consciousness into the wonderful Paradise of a child's sleep. "Sleep, Polly, sleep," said Barbox Brothers, as her head dropped on his shoulder; "you shall not fall out of this bed easily, at any rate!"

What rustling piece of paper he took from his pocket, carefully folded into the bosom of Polly's frock, shall not be mentioned. He said nothing about it, and nothing shall be said about it. They drove to a modest suburb of the great ingenious town, and stopped at the fore-court of a small house. "Do not wake the child," said Barbox Brothers softly to the driver; "I will carry her in as she is."

Greeting the light at the opened door which was held by Polly's mother, Polly's bearer passed on with mother and child into a ground-floor room. There, stretched on a sofa, lay a sick man, sorely wasted, who covered his eyes with his emaciated hands.

"Tresham," said Barbox in a kindly voice, "I have brought you back your Polly, fast asleep. Give me your hand, and tell me you are better."

The sick man reached forth his right hand, and bowed his head over the hand into which it was taken, and kissed it. "Thank you, thank you! I may say that I am well and happy."

"That 's brave," said Barbox. "Tresham, I have a fancy — Can you make room for me beside you here?"

He sat down on the sofa as he said the words, cherishing the plump peachy cheek that lay uppermost on his shoulder.

"I have a fancy, Tresham (I am getting quite an old fellow now, you know, and old fellows may take fancies into their heads sometimes), to give up Polly, having found her, to no one but you. Will you take her from me?"

As the father held out his arms for the child, each of the two men looked steadily at the other.

"She is very dear to you, Tresham?"

"Unutterably dear."

"God bless her! It is not much, Polly," he continued, turning his eyes upon her peaceful face as he apostrophised her, —"it is not much, Polly, for a blind and sinful man to invoke a blessing on something so far better than himself as a little child is; but it would be much — much upon his cruel head, and much upon his guilty soul — if he could be so wicked as to invoke a curse. He had better have a millstone round his neck, and be cast into the deepest sea. Live and thrive, my pretty baby!" Here he kissed her. "Live and prosper, and become in time the mother of other little children, like the Angels who behold The Father's face!"

He kissed her again, gave her up gently to both her parents, and went out.

But he went not to Wales. No, he never went to Wales. He went straightway for another stroll about the town, and he looked in upon the people at their work, and at their play, here, there, everywhere, and where not. For he was Barbox Brothers and Co. now, and had taken thousands of partners into the solitary firm.

He had at length got back to his hotel room, and was standing before his fire refreshing himself with a glass of hot drink which he had stood upon the chimney-piece, when he heard the town clocks striking, and, referring to his watch, found the evening to have so slipped away, that they were striking twelve. As he put up his watch again, his eyes met those of his reflection in the chimney-glass.

"Why, it 's your birthday already," he said, smiling. "You are looking very well. I wish you many happy returns of the

He had never before bestowed that wish upon himself. "By Jupiter!" he discovered, "it alters the whole case of running away from one's birthday! It's a thing to explain to Phœbe. Besides, here is quite a long story to tell her, that has come out of the road with no story. I'll go back, instead of going on. I'll go back by my friend Lamps's Up X presently."

He went back to Mugby Junction, and, in point of fact, he established himself at Mugby Junction. It was the convenient place to live in for brightening Phœbe's life. It was the convenient place to live in for having her taught music by Beckey. It was the convenient place to live in for occasionally meeting Polly. It was the convenient place to live in for being joined at will to all sorts of agreeable places and persons. So he became settled there, and, his house standing in an elevated situation, it is noteworthy of him in conclusion, as Polly herself might (not irreverently) have put it.—

[illegible]

HERE FOLLOWS THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT WAS SEEN, HEARD, OR OTHERWISE PICKED UP, BY THE GENTLEMAN FOR NOWHERE, IN HIS CAREFUL STUDY OF THE JUNCTION.

CHAPTER III

THE BOY AT MUGBY

[illegible]

contents which are the same groundwork, fended off from the traveller by a barrier of stale sponge-cakes erected atop of the counter, and lastly exposed sideways to the glare of Our Missis's eye, — you ask a Boy so sitiwated, next time you stop in a hurry at Mugby, for anything to drink; you take particular notice that he 'll try to seem not to hear you, that he 'll appear in a absent manner to survey the Line through a transparent medium composed of your head and body, and that he won't serve you as long as you can possibly bear it. That 's me.

What a lark it is! We are the Model Establishment, we are, at Mugby. Other Refreshment Rooms send their imperfect young ladies up to be finished off by our Missis. For some of the young ladies, when they 're new to the business, come into it mild! Ah! Our Missis, she soon takes that out of 'em. Why, I originally come into the business meek myself. But Our Missis, she soon took that out of *me*.

What a delightful lark it is! I look upon us Refreshmenters as ockipying the only proudly independent footing on the Line. There 's Papers, for instance, — my honourable friend, if he will allow me to call him so, — him as belongs to Smith's book-stall. Why, he no more dares to be up to our Refreshmenting games than he dares to jump atop of a locomotive with her steam at full pressure, and cut away upon her alone, driving himself, at limited-mail speed. Papers, he 'd get his head punched at every compartment, first, second, and third, the whole length of a train, if he was to ventur to imitate my demeanour. It 's the same with the porters, the same with the guards, the same with the ticket clerks, the same the whole way up to the secretary, traffic manager, or very chairman. There ain't a one among 'em on the nobly independent footing we are. Did you ever catch one of *them*, when you wanted anything of him, making a system of surveying the Line through a transparent medium composed of your head and body? I should hope not.

You should see our Bandolining Room at Mugby Junction. It 's led to by the door behind the counter, which you 'll notice usually stands ajar, and it 's the room where Our Missis and our young ladies Bandolines their hair. You should see 'em at it, betwixt trains, Bandolining away, as if they was anointing themselves for the combat. When you 're telegraphed, you should

see their noses all a going up with scorn, as if it was a [illegible] the working of the same Cooke and Wheatstone [illegible] chinery. You should hear Our Missis give the [illegible] comes the Beast to be Fed!" and then [illegible] indignantly skipping across the Line, from the [illegible] or Wicer Warsaw, and begin to pitch the [illegible] plates, and chuck the sawdust sangwiches [illegible] and get out the—ha, ha, ha!—the sherry, [illegible] eye!—for your Refreshment.

It's only in the Isle of the Brave and Land [illegible] (by which, of course, I mean to say [illegible]) fre[illegible] is so effective, so [illegible] check upon the public. There was a Foreigner, [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

the glorious Tarnal I never did see yet! And if I hain't found the eighth wonder of monarchical Creation, in finding Yew, and Yewer young ladies, and Yewer fixin's, solid and liquid, all as aforesaid, established in a country where the people air not absolute Loonaticks, I am Extra Double Darned with a Nip and Frizzle to the innermostest grit! Wheerfur — Theer! — I la'af! I Dew, ma'arm. I la'af!" And so he went, stamping and shaking his sides, along the platform all the way to his own compartment.

I think it was her standing up agin the Foreigner as giv' Our Missis the idea of going over to France, and droring a comparison betwixt Refreshmenting as followed among the frog-eaters, and Refreshmenting as triumphant in the Isle of the Brave and Land of the Free (by which, of course, I mean to say agin, Britannia). Our young ladies, Miss Whiff, Miss Piff, and Mrs. Sniff, was unanimous opposed to her going; for, as they says to Our Missis one and all, it is well beknown to the hends of the herth as no other nation except Britain has a idea of anythink, but above all of business. Why, then, should you tire yourself to prove what is already proved? Our Missis, however (being a teaser at all pints), stood out grim obstinate, and got a return pass by Southeastern Tidal, to go right through, if such should be her dispositions, to Marseilles.

Sniff is husband to Mrs. Sniff, and is a regular insignificant cove. He looks arter the sawdust department in a back room, and is sometimes, when we are very hard put to it, let behind the counter with a cork-screw; but never when it can be helped, his demeanour towards the public being disgusting servile. How Mrs. Sniff ever come so far to lower herself as to marry him, I don't know; but I suppose *he* does, and I should think he wished he did n't, for he leads a awful life. Mrs. Sniff could n't be much harder with him if he was public. Similarly, Miss Whiff and Miss Piff, taking the tone of Mrs. Sniff, they shoulder Sniff about when he *is* let in with a cork-screw, and they whisk things out of his hands when in his servility he is a going to let the public have 'em, and they snap him up when in the crawling baseness of his spirit he is a going to answer a public question, and they drore more tears into his eyes than ever the mustard does which he all day long lays on to the sawdust. (But it ain't strong.) Once, when Sniff had the repulsiveness to reach across to get the milk-pot to hand over for a baby, I

see Our Missis in her rage catch him by both his shoul spin him out into the Bandolining Room.

But Mrs. Sniff, — how different! She's the one the one as you'll notice to be always looking another you, when you look at her. She's the one with t waist buckled in tight in front, and with the lace cu wrists, which she puts on the edge of the counter be and stands a smoothing while the public foams. This ing the cuffs and looking another way while the public the last accomplishment taught to the young ladies a Mugby to be finished by Our Missis; and it's alwa by Mrs. Sniff.

When Our Missis went away upon her journey, M was left in charge. She did hold the public in ch beautiful! In all my time, I never see half so man tea given without milk to people as wanted it with, n many cups of tea with milk given to people as wante out. When foaming ensued, Mrs. Sniff would say: you'd better settle it among yourselves, and change another." It was a most highly delicious lark. I en Refreshmenting business more than ever, and was so gl took to it when young.

Our Missis returned. It got circulated among th ladies, and it as it might be penetrated to me thr crevices of the Bandolining Room, that she had 't reveal, if revelations so contemptible could be digni the name. Agitation become awakened. Excitement in the stirrups. Expectation stood a-tiptoe. At lengt put forth that on our slackest evening in the week, an slackest time of that evening betwixt trains, Our Mis give her views of foreign Refreshmenting, in the Ba Room.

It was arranged tasteful for the purpose. The Ba table and glass was hid in a corner, a arm-chair was el a packing-case for our Missis's ockypation, a table and of water (no sherry in it, thankee) was placed beside of the pupils, the season being autumn, and hollyh dahlias being in, ornamented the wall with three d those flowers. On one might be read, "MAY ALBIO LEARN;" on another, "KEEP THE PUBLIC DOWN;" other, "OUR REFRESHMENTING CHARTER." The w

a beautiful appearance, with which the beauty of the sentiments corresponded.

On Our Missis's brow was wrote Severity, as she ascended the fatal platform. (Not that that was anythink new.) Miss Whiff and Miss Piff sat at her feet. Three chairs from the Waiting Room might have been perceived by a average eye, in front of her, on which the pupils was accommodated. Behind them, a very close observer might have discerned a Boy. Myself.

"Where," said Our Missis, glancing gloomily around, "is Sniff?"

"I thought it better," answered Mrs. Sniff, "that he should not be let to come in. He is such an Ass."

"No doubt," assented Our Missis. "But for that reason is it not desirable to improve his mind?"

"Oh, nothing will ever improve *him!*" said Mrs. Sniff.

"However," pursued Our Missis, "call him in, Ezekiel."

I called him in. The appearance of the low-minded cove was hailed with disapprobation from all sides, on account of his having brought his cork-screw with him. He pleaded "the force of habit."

"The force!" said Mrs. Sniff. "Don't let us have you talking about force, for Gracious' sake. There! Do stand still where you are, with your back against the wall."

He is a smiling piece of vacancy, and he smiled in the mean way in which he will even smile at the public if he gets a chance (language can say no meaner of him), and he stood upright near the door, with the back of his head agin the wall, as if he was a waiting for somebody to come and measure his heighth for the Army.

"I should not enter, ladies," says Our Missis, "on the revolting disclosures I am about to make, if it was not in the hope that they will cause you to be yet more implacable in the exercise of the power you wield in a constitutional country, and yet more devoted to the constitutional motto which I see before me," — it was behind her, but the words sounded better so, — "'May Albion never learn!'"

Here the pupils as had made the motto admired it, and cried, "Hear! Hear! Hear!" Sniff, showing an inclination to join in chorus, got himself frowned down by every brow.

"The baseness of the French," pursued Our Missis, "as dis-

played in the fawning nature of their Refreshmenting, equ
if not surpasses, anythink as was ever heard of the base
the celebrated Bonaparte."

Miss Whiff, Miss Piff, and me, we drored a heavy bre
equal to saying, "We thought as much!" Miss Whiff
Miss Piff seeming to object to my droring mine along w
theirs, I drored another to aggravate 'em.

"Shall I be believed," says Our Missis with flashing ey
"when I tell you that no sooner had I set my foot upon t
treacherous shore —"

Here Sniff, either bursting out mad, or thinking aloud, s
in a low voice: "Feet. Plural, you know."

The cowering that come upon him when he was spurned
all eyes, added to his being beneath contempt, was suffici
punishment for a cove so grovelling. In the midst of a sil
rendered more impressive by the turned-up female noses w
which it was pervaded, Our Missis went on: —

"Shall I be believed when I tell you that no sooner had
landed," this word with a killing look at Sniff, "on that trea
erous shore than I was ushered into a Refreshment Room wh
there were — I do not exaggerate — actually eatable things
eat?"

A groan burst from the ladies. I not only did myself
honour of jining, but also of lengthening it out.

"Where there were," Our Missis added, "not only eata
things to eat, but also drinkable things to drink?"

A murmur, swelling almost into a scream, arix. Miss P
trembling with indignation, called out, "Name!"

"I *will* name," said Our Missis. "There was roast fo
hot and cold; there was smoking roast veal surrounded w
browned potatoes; there was hot soup with (again I ask, sh
I be credited?) nothing bitter in it, and no flour to choke
the consumer; there was a variety of cold dishes set off w
jelly; there was salad; there was — mark me! *fresh* pa
and that of a light construction; there was a luscious show
fruit; [illegible] was bottles and decanters of sound small wine,
every [illegible] adapted to every pocket; the same odious st
men[illegible] to [illegible] and these were set out upon
cou[illegible] all [illegible] themselves."

[illegible] that Mrs. Sniff, though
le[illegible] up and held the tumbler
th[illegible]

"This," proceeds Our Missis, "was my first unconstitutional experience. Well would it have been if it had been my last and worst. But no. As I proceeded farther into that enslaved and ignorant land, its aspect became more hideous. I need not explain to this assembly the ingredients and formation of the British Refreshment sangwich ?"

Universal laughter, — except from Sniff, who, as sangwich-cutter, shook his head in a state of the utmost dejection as he stood with it agin the wall.

"Well!" said Our Missis with dilated nostrils. "Take a fresh, crisp, long, crusty penny loaf made of the whitest and best flour. Cut it longwise through the middle. Insert a fair and nicely fitting slice of ham. Tie a smart piece of ribbon round the middle of the whole to bind it together. Add at one end a neat wrapper of clean white paper by which to hold it. And the universal French Refreshment sangwich busts on your disgusted vision."

A cry of "Shame!" from all — except Sniff, which rubbed his stomach with a soothing hand.

"I need not," said Our Missis, "explain to this assembly the usual formation and fitting of the British Refreshment Room!"

No, no, and laughter. Sniff agin shaking his head in low spirits agin the wall.

"Well," said Our Missis, "what would you say to a general decoration of everythink, to hangings (sometimes elegant), to easy velvet furniture, to abundance of little tables, to abundance of little seats, to brisk bright waiters, to great convenience, to a pervading cleanliness and tastefulness positively addressing the public, and making the Beast thinking itself worth the pains?"

Contemptuous fury on the part of all the ladies. Mrs. Sniff looking as if she wanted somebody to hold her, and everybody else looking as if they'd rayther not.

"Three times," said Our Missis, working herself into a truly terrimenjious state, — "three times did I see these shameful things, only between the coast and Paris, and not counting either: at Hazebroucke, at Arras, at Amiens. But worse remains. Tell me, what would you call a person who should propose in England that there should be kept, say at our own del Mugby Junction, pretty baskets, each holding an assorted unch and dessert for one, each at a certain fixed price, and

each within a passenger's power to take away, to empty [illegible] carriage at perfect leisure, and to return at another stat[illegible] or a hundred miles farther on?"

There was disagreement what such a person sh[illegible]d be. Whether revolutionist, atheist, Bright [illegible] English. Miss Piff screeched her shrill op[illegible] last, [illegible] words: "A malignant maniac!"

"I adopt," says Our Missis, "the brand set [illegible] on by the righteous indignation of my friend Miss P[illegible] A malignant maniac. Know, then, that that malignant [illegible] has sprung from the congenial soil of France, an[illegible] that malignant ma[illegible] was in unchecked action on this same part [illegible] my journey."

I noticed that Sniff was a-rubbing his hands, and that Mrs. Sniff had got her eye upon him. But I did not take no [illegible] ticular notice, owing to the excited state in which [illegible] ladies was, and to feeling myself called upon to keep [illegible] a-head.

"[illegible] of Paris," said Our M[illegible]

[illegible]

This time a groan from me, kep' up by the young ladies.

"Fourth: — and here," says Our Missis, "I claim your angriest sympathy, — attention, common civility, nay, even politeness!"

Me and the young ladies regularly raging mad all together.

"And I cannot in conclusion," says Our Missis with her spitefullest sneer, "give you a completer pictur of that despicable nation (after what I have related), than assuring you that they would n't bear our constitutional ways and noble independence at Mugby Junction for a single month, and that they would turn us to the right-about, and put another system in our places, as soon as look at us; perhaps sooner, for I do not believe they have the good taste to care to look at us twice."

The swelling tumult was arrested in its rise. Sniff, bore away by his servile disposition, had drored up his leg with a higher and a higher relish, and was now discovered to be waving his cork-screw over his head. It was at this moment that Mrs. Sniff, who had kep' her eye upon him like the fabled obelisk, descended on her victim. Our Missis followed them both out, and cries was heard in the sawdust department.

You come into the Down Refreshment Room at the Junction making believe you don't know me, and I 'll pint you out with my right thumb over my shoulder which is Our Missis, and which is Miss Whiff, and which is Miss Piff, and which is Mrs. Sniff. But you won't get a chance to see Sniff, because he disappeared that night. Whether he perished, tore to pieces, I cannot say; but his cork-screw alone remains to bear witness to the servility of his disposition.

NO THOROUGHFARE[1]

THE OVERTURE

Day of the month and year, November the thirtieth, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-five. London Time by the great clock of St. Paul's, ten at night. All the lesser London churches strain their metallic throats. Some flippantly begin before the heavy bell of the great cathedral; some tardily begin three, four, half a dozen strokes behind it; all are in sufficiently near accord to leave a resonance in the air, as if the winged father who devours his children had made a sounding sweep with his gigantic scythe in flying over the city.

What is this clock lower than most of the rest, and nearer to the ear, that lags so far behind to-night as to strike into the vibration alone? This is the clock of the Hospital for Foundling Children. Time was, when the Foundlings were received without question in a cradle at the gate. Time is, when inquiries are made respecting them, and they are taken as by favour from the mothers, who relinquish all natural knowledge of them and claim to them for evermore.

The moon is at the full, and the night is fair with light clouds. The day has been otherwise than fair, for slush and mud, thickened with the droppings of heavy fog, lie black in the streets. The veiled lady who flutters up and down near the postern gate of the Hospital for Foundling Children has need to be well shod to-night.

She flutters to and fro, avoiding the stand of hackney-coaches, and often pausing in the shadow of the western end of the great quadrangle wall, with her face turned towards the gate. As above her there is the purity of the moonlit sky, and below her there are the defilements of the pavement, so may she, haply, be divided in her mind between two vistas of reflection or experience! As her footprints crossing and recrossing one

[1] Written conjointly by Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins. Those parts only are here printed which were exclusively by Dickens.

another have made a labyrinth in the mire, so may her track in life have involved itself in an intricate and unravellable tangle!

The postern gate of the Hospital for Foundling Children opens, and a young woman comes out. The lady stands aside, observes closely, sees that the gate is quietly closed again from within, and follows the young woman.

Two or three streets have been traversed in silence before she, following close behind the object of her attention, stretches out her hand and touches her. Then the young woman stops and looks round, startled.

"You touched me last night, and, when I turned my head, you would not speak. Why do you follow me like a silent ghost?"

"It was not," returned the lady in a low voice, "that I would not speak, but that I could not when I tried."

"What do you want of me? I have never done you any harm?"

"Never."

"Do I know you?"

"No."

"Then what can you want of me?"

"Here are two guineas in this paper. Take my poor little present, and I will tell you."

Into the young woman's face, which is honest and comely, comes a flash as she replies, "There is neither grown person nor child in all the large establishment that I belong to, who has n't a good word for Sally. I am Sally. Could I be so well thought of, if I was to be bought?"

"I do not mean to buy you; I mean only to reward you very slightly."

Sally firmly, but not ungently, closes and puts back the offering hand. "If there is anything I can do for you, ma'am, that I will not do for its own sake, you are much mistaken in me if you think that I will do it for money. What is it you want?"

"You are one of the nurses or attendants at the Hospital; I saw you leave to-night and last night."

"Yes, I am. I am Sally."

"There is a pleasant patience in your face wl
believe that very young children would ta

"God bless 'em! So they do."

The lady lifts her veil, and shows a face no older than the nurse's. A face far more refined and capable than hers, but wild and worn with sorrow.

"I am the miserable mother of a baby lately received under your care. I have a prayer to make to you."

Instinctively respecting the confidence which has drawn aside the veil, Sally — whose ways are all ways of simplicity and spontaneity — replaces it, and begins to cry.

"You will listen to my prayer?" the lady urges. "You will not be deaf to the agonised entreaty of such a broken suppliant as I am?"

"Oh, dear, dear, dear!" cries Sally. "What shall I say, or can I say? Don't talk of prayers. Prayers are to be put up to the Good Father of All, and not to nurses and such. And there! I am only to hold my place for half a year longer, till another young woman can be trained up to it. I am going to be married. I should n't have been out last night, and I should n't have been out to-night, but that my Dick (he is the young man I am going to be married to) lies ill, and I help his mother and sister to watch him. Don't take on so, don't take on so!"

"Oh, good Sally, dear Sally," moans the lady, catching at her dress entreatingly. "As you are hopeful and I am hopeless; as a fair way in life is before you, which can never, never be before me; as you can aspire to become a respected wife, and as you can aspire to become a proud mother; as you are a living loving woman, and must die, for GOD's sake hear my distracted petition!"

"Deary, deary, deary ME!" cries Sally, her desperation culminating in the pronoun, "what am I ever to do? And there! See how you turn my own words back upon me. I tell you I am going to be married, on purpose to make it clearer to you that I am going to leave, and therefore could n't help you if I would, Poor Thing, and you make it seem to my own self as if I was cruel in going to be married and *not* helping you. It ain't kind. Now, is it kind, Poor Thing?"

"Sally! Hear me, my dear. My entreaty is for no help in the future. It applies to what is past. It is only to be told in two words."

"There! This is worse and worse," cries Sally, "supposing that I understand what two words you mean."

"You do understand. What are the names they have given my poor baby? I ask no more than that. I have read of the customs of the place. He has been christened in the chapel, and registered by some surname in the book. He was received last Monday evening. What have they called him?"

Down upon her knees in the foul mud of the byway into which they have strayed — an empty street without a thoroughfare giving on the dark gardens of the Hospital — the lady would drop in her passionate entreaty, but that Sally prevents her.

"Don't! Don't! You make me feel as if I was setting myself up to be good. Let me look in your pretty face again. Put your two hands in mine. Now, promise. You will never ask me anything more than the two words?"

"Never! Never!"

"You will never put them to a bad use, if I say them?"

"Never! Never!"

"Walter Wilding."

The lady lays her face upon the nurse's breast, draws her close in her embrace with both arms, murmurs a blessing and the words, "Kiss him for me!" and is gone.

Day of the month and year, the first Sunday in October, one thousand eight hundred and forty-seven. London Time by the great clock of St. Paul's, half-past one in the afternoon. The clock of the Hospital for Foundling Children is well up with the Cathedral to-day. Service in the chapel is over, and the Foundling children are at dinner.

There are numerous lookers-on at the dinner, as the custom is. There are two or three governors, whole families from the congregation, smaller groups of both sexes, individual stragglers of various degrees. The bright autumnal sun strikes freshly into the wards; and the heavy-framed windows through which it shines, and the panelled walls on which it strikes, are such windows and such walls as pervade Hogarth's pictures. The girls' refectory (including that of the younger children) is the principal attraction. Neat attendants silently glide about the orderly and silent tables; the lookers-on move or stop as the fancy takes them; comments in whispers on face such a number from such a window are not unfrequent; many of the faces are of a character to fix attention. Some of the visitors [illegible]

the outside public are accustomed visitors. They have established a speaking acquaintance with the occupants of particular seats at the tables, and halt at those points to bend down and say a word or two. It is no disparagement to their kindness that those points are generally points where personal attractions are. The monotony of the long spacious rooms and the double lines of faces is agreeably relieved by these incidents, although so slight.

A veiled lady, who has no companion, goes among the company. It would seem that curiosity and opportunity have never brought her there before. She has the air of being a little troubled by the sight, and, as she goes the length of the tables, it is with a hesitating step and an uneasy manner. At length she comes to the refectory of the boys. They are so much less popular than the girls that it is bare of visitors when she looks in at the doorway.

But just within the doorway, chances to stand, inspecting, an elderly female attendant, some order of matron or housekeeper. To whom the lady addresses natural questions: As, how many boys? At what age are they usually put out in life? Do they often take a fancy to the sea? So, lower and lower in tone until the lady puts the question, "Which is Walter Wilding?"

Attendant's head shaken. Against the rules.

"You know which is Walter Wilding?"

So keenly does the attendant feel the closeness with which the lady's eyes examine her face, that she keeps her own eyes fast upon the floor, lest by wandering in the right direction they should betray her.

"I know which is Walter Wilding, but it is not my place, ma'am, to tell names to visitors."

"But you can show me without telling me."

The lady's hand moves quietly to the attendant's hand. Pause and silence.

"I am going to pass round the tables," says the lady's interlocutor, without seeming to address her. "Follow me with your eyes. The boy that I stop at and speak to will not matter to you. But the boy that I touch will be Walter Wilding. Say nothing more to me, and move a little away."

Quickly acting on the hint, the lady passes on into the room, and looks about her. After a few moments, the attendant, in a staid official way, walks down outside the line of tables on

mencing on her left hand. She goes the whole length of the line, turns, and comes back on the inside. Very slightly glancing in the lady's direction, she stops, bends forward, and speaks. The boy whom she addresses lifts his head and replies. Good-humouredly and easily, as she listens to what he says, she lays her hand upon the shoulder of the next boy on his right. That the action may be well noted, she keeps her hand on the shoulder while speaking in return, and pats it twice or thrice before moving away. She completes her tour of the tables, touching no one else, and passes out by a door at the opposite end of the long room.

Dinner is done, and the lady, too, walks down outside the line of tables commencing on her left hand, goes the whole length of the line, turns, and comes back on the inside. Other people have strolled in, fortunately for her, and stand sprinkled about. She lifts her veil, and, stopping at the touched boy, asks how old he is?

"I am twelve, ma'am," he answers, with his bright eyes fixed on hers.

"Are you well and happy?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"May you take these sweetmeats from my hand?"

"If you please to give them to me."

In stooping low for the purpose, the lady touches the boy's face with her forehead and with her hair. Then, lowering her veil again, she passes on, and passes out without looking back.[1]

[1] Two acts follow; fourteen years more have passed, and Walter Wilding is shown as a wine merchant, trading under the name of Wilding and Co. His mother had removed him from the Foundling Hospital, set him up in business, and died without disclosing the name of his father. Wilding advertises for a housekeeper, who turns out to be Sally, now a widow. She tells him what neither he nor his mother knew, that the real Walter Wilding had been adopted in infancy, and the same name bestowed on him, a later foundling. Wilding now sets out to find the real son of his mother, but is thwarted at every turn, finding No Thoroughfare, as it were, written up at each point. Before he dies he made his new partner, George Vendale, and his lawyer, Mr. Bintrey, [illegible] of his estate, with instructions to turn it over to the real Wilding on his being found. Vendale is in love with a half niece of a Swiss named Obenreizer, who has been agent of Defresnier and Co., correspondents of [illegible] Wilding and Co. He is a sinister person, and refuses to consent to Vendale's suit until he shall have an income of three thousand pounds a year. [illegible] Vendale discovers a fraud in the [illegible] with Defresnier and Co., and sets out for Switzerland, in company with Obenreizer, to get at the bottom of the difficulty.

ACT III

IN THE VALLEY

It was about the middle of the month of February when Vendale and Obenreizer set forth on their expedition. The winter being a hard one, the time was bad for travellers. So bad was it that these two travellers, coming to Strasbourg, found its great inns almost empty. And even the few people they did encounter in that city, who had started from England or from Paris on business journeys towards the interior of Switzerland, were turning back.

Many of the railroads in Switzerland, that tourists pass easily enough now, were almost or quite impracticable then. Some were not begun; more were not completed. On such as were open, there were still large gaps of old road where communication in the winter season was often stopped; on others, there were weak points where the new work was not safe, either under conditions of severe frost, or of rapid thaw. The running of trains on this last class was not to be counted on in the worst time of the year, was contingent upon weather, or was wholly abandoned through the months considered the most dangerous.

At Strasbourg there were more travellers' stories afloat, respecting the difficulties of the way farther on, than there were travellers to relate them. Many of these tales were as wild as usual; but the more modestly marvellous did derive some colour from the circumstance that people were indisputably turning back. However, as the road to Basle was open, Vendale's resolution to push on was in nowise disturbed. Obenreizer's resolution was necessarily Vendale's, seeing that he stood at bay thus desperately: He must be ruined, or must destroy the evidence that Vendale carried about him, even if he destroyed Vendale with it.

The state of mind of each of these two fellow-travellers towards the other was this. Obenreizer, encircled by impending ruin through Vendale's quickness of action, and seeing the circle narrowed every hour by Vendale's energy, hated him with the animosity of a fierce, cunning, lower animal. He had always had instinctive movements in his breast against him; perhaps, because of that old sore of gentleman and peasant; perhaps,

because of the openness of his nature; perhaps, because of his better looks; perhaps, because of his success with Marguerite; perhaps, on all those grounds, the two last not the least. And now he saw in him, besides, the hunter who was tracking him down. Vendale, on the other hand, always contending generously against his first vague mistrust, now felt bound to contend against it more than ever, reminding himself, "He is Marguerite's guardian. We are on perfectly friendly terms; he is my companion of his own proposal, and can have no interested motive in sharing this undesirable journey." To which pleas in behalf of Obenreizer, chance added one consideration more, when they came to Basle after a journey of more than twice the average duration.

They had had a late dinner, and were alone in an inn room there, overhanging the Rhine, at that place rapid and deep, swollen and loud. Vendale lounged upon a couch, and Obenreizer walked to and fro; now stopping at the window, looking at the crooked reflection of the town lights in the dark water (and peradventure thinking, "If I could fling him into it!"), now resuming his walk with his eyes upon the floor.

"Where shall I rob him, if I can? Where shall I murder him, if I must?" So, as he paced the room, ran the river, ran the river, ran the river.

The burden seemed to him, at last, to be growing so plain, that he stopped; thinking it as well to suggest another burden to his companion.

"The Rhine sounds to-night," he said, with a smile, "like the old water-fall at home. That water-fall which my mother showed to travellers (I told you of it once). The sound of it changed with the weather, as does the sound of all falling waters and flowing waters. When I was pupil of the watchmaker, I remembered it as sometimes saying to me for whole days, 'Who are you, my little wretch? Who are you, my little wretch?' I remembered it as saying, other times, when its sound was hollow, and storm was coming up the Pass, 'Boom, boom, boom! Beat him, beat him, beat him.' Like my mother enraged — if she was my mother."

"If she was?" said Vendale, gradually changing his attitude to a sitting one. "If she was? Why ... say 'if?'"

"What do I know?" repl ... throwing up his hands and letting

would you have? I am so obscurely born that how can I say! I was very young, and all the rest of the family were men and women, and my so-called parents were old. Anything is possible of a case like that."

"Did you ever doubt — ?"

"I told you once, I doubt the marriage of those two," he replied, throwing up his hands again, as if he were throwing the unprofitable subject away. "But here I am in Creation. I come of no fine family. What does it matter?"

"At least you are Swiss," said Vendale, after following him with his eyes to and fro.

"How do I know?" he retorted abruptly, and stopping to look back over his shoulder. "I say to you, at least you are English. How do you know?"

"By what I have been told from infancy."

"Ah! I know of myself that way."

"And," added Vendale, pursuing the thought that he could not drive back, "by my earliest recollections."

"I also. I know of myself that way — if that way satisfies."

"Does it not satisfy you?"

"It must. There is nothing like 'it must' in this little world. It must. Two short words, those, but stronger than long proof or reasoning."

"You and poor Wilding were born in the same year. You were nearly of an age," said Vendale, again thoughtfully looking after him as he resumed his pacing up and down.

"Yes. Very nearly."

Could Obenreizer be the missing man? In the unknown associations of things, was there a subtler meaning than he himself thought, in that theory so often on his lips about the smallness of the world? Had the Swiss letter presenting him followed so close on Mrs. Goldstraw's revelation concerning the infant who had been taken away to Switzerland, because he was that infant grown a man? In a world where so many deeps lie unsounded, it might be. The chances, or the laws — call them either — that had wrought out the revival of Vendale's own acquaintance with Obenreizer, and had ripened it into intimacy, and had brought them here together this present winter night, were hardly less curious; while, read by such a light, they were seen to cohere towards the furtherance of a continuous and an intelligible purpose.

[redacted]

7endale's awakened thoughts ran high while his eyes musly followed Obenreizer pacing up and down the room, the ar ever running to the tune: "Where shall I rob him, if I ? Where shall I murder him, if I must?" The secret of dead friend was in no hazard from Vendale's lips; but just his friend had died of its weight, so did he in his lighter cession feel the burden of the trust, and the obligation to low any clue, however obscure. He rapidly asked himself, uld he like this man to be the real Wilding? No. Argue wn his mistrust as he might, he was unwilling to put such a ostitute in the place of his late guileless, outspoken, childlike rtner. He rapidly asked himself, would he like this man to rich? No. He had more power than enough over Marerite as it was, and wealth might invest him with more. ould he like this man to be Marguerite's Guardian, and yet oved to stand in no degree of relationship towards her, hower disconnected and distant? No. But these were not conlerations to come between him and fidelity to the dead. Let m see to it that they passed him, with no other notice than e knowledge that they *had* passed him, and left him bent on e discharge of a solemn duty. And he did see to it, so soon at he followed his companion with ungrudging eyes, while he ll paced the room; that companion, whom he supposed to be oodily reflecting on his own birth, and not on another man's least of all what man's — violent Death.

The road in advance from Basle to Neuchâtel was better an had been represented. The latest weather had done it od. Drivers, both of horses and mules, had come in that ening after dark, and had reported nothing more difficult to overcome than trials of patience, harness, wheels, axles, and iipcord. A bargain was soon struck for a carriage and horses, take them on in the morning, and to start before daylight.

"Do you lock your door at night when travelling?" asked oenreizer, standing warming his hands by the wood fire in endale's chamber, before going to his own.

"Not I. I sleep too soundly."

"You are so sound a sleeper?" he retorted, with an admirg look. "What a blessing!"

"Anything but a blessing to the rest of the house," rejoined endale, "if I had to be knocked up in the morning from the itside of my bedroom door."

[redacted]

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"Ah! I know of myself that way."

"And," added Vendale, pursuing the thought that [illegible]

[illegible]

Vendale's awakened thoughts ran high while his eyes musingly followed Obenreizer pacing up and down the room, the river ever running to the tune: "Where shall I rob him, if I can? Where shall I murder him, if I must?" The secret of his dead friend was in no hazard from Vendale's lips; but just as his friend had died of its weight, so did he in his lighter succession feel the burden of the trust, and the obligation to follow any clue, however obscure. He rapidly asked himself, would he like this man to be the real Wilding? No. Argue down his mistrust as he might, he was unwilling to put such a substitute in the place of his late guileless, outspoken, childlike partner. He rapidly asked himself, would he like this man to be rich? No. He had more power than enough over Marguerite as it was, and wealth might invest him with more. Would he like this man to be Marguerite's Guardian, and yet proved to stand in no degree of relationship towards her, however disconnected and distant? No. But these were not considerations to come between him and fidelity to the dead. Let him see to it that they passed him, with no other notice than the knowledge that they *had* passed him, and left him bent on the discharge of a solemn duty. And he did see to it, so soon that he followed his companion with ungrudging eyes, while he still paced the room; that companion, whom he supposed to be moodily reflecting on his own birth, and not on another man's — least of all what man's — violent Death.

The road in advance from Basle to Neuchâtel was better than had been represented. The latest weather had done it good. Drivers, both of horses and mules, had come in that evening after dark, and had reported nothing more difficult to be overcome than trials of patience, harness, wheels, axles, and whipcord. A bargain was soon struck for a carriage and horses, to take them on in the morning, and to start before daylight

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"Anything but a blessing to the rest of the house," rejoined Vendale, "if I had to be knocked up in the morning from outside of my bedroom door."

[redacted]

"I, too," said Obenreizer, "leave open my room. But let me advise you, as a Swiss who knows: always, when you travel in my country, put your papers — and, of course, your money — under your pillow. Always the same place."

"You are not complimentary to your countrymen," laughed Vendale.

"My countrymen," said Obenreizer, with that light touch of his friend's elbows by way of Good Night and benediction, "I suppose are like the majority of men. And the majority of men will take what they can get. Adieu! At four in the morning."

"Adieu! At four."

Left to himself, Vendale raked the logs together, sprinkled over them the white wood ashes lying on the hearth, and sat down to compose his thoughts. But they still ran high on their latest theme, and the running of the river tended to agitate rather than to quiet them. As he sat thinking, what little disposition he had had to sleep departed. He felt it hopeless to lie down yet, and sat dressed by the fire. Marguerite, Wilding, Obenreizer, the business he was then upon, and a thousand hopes and doubts that had nothing to do with it, occupied his mind at once. Everything seemed to have power over him but slumber. The departed disposition to sleep kept far away.

He had sat for a long time thinking on the hearth, when his candle burned down, and its light went out. It was of little moment; there was light enough in the fire. He changed his attitude, and, leaning his arm on the chair-back, and his chin upon that hand, sat thinking still.

But he sat between the fire and the bed, and, as the fire flickered in the play of air from the fast-flowing river, his enlarged shadow fluttered on the white wall by the bedside. His attitude gave it an air, half of mourning and half of bending over the bed, imploring. His eyes were observant of it when he became troubled by the disagreeable fancy that it was like Wilding's shadow, and not his own.

A slight change of place would cause it to disappear. He made the change, and the apparition of his disturbed fancy vanished. He now sat in the shade of a little nook beside the fire, and the door of the room was before him.

It had a long cumbrous iron latch. He saw the latch slowly and softly rise. The door opened a very little, and came to

again, as though only the air had moved it. But he saw that the latch was out of the hasp.

The door opened again very slowly, until it opened wide enough to admit some one. It afterwards remained still for a while, as though cautiously held open on the other side. The figure of a man then entered, with its face turned towards the bed, and stood quiet just within the door. Until it said, in a low half whisper, at the same time taking one step forward: "Vendale!"

"What now?" he answered, springing from his seat. "Who is it?"

It was Obenreizer, and he uttered a cry of surprise as Vendale came upon him from that unexpected direction. "Not in bed?" he said, catching him by both shoulders with an instinctive tendency to a struggle. "Then something *is* wrong?"

"What do you mean?" said Vendale, releasing himself.

"First tell me; you are not ill?"

"Ill? No."

"I have had a bad dream about you. How is it that I see you up and dressed?"

"My good fellow, I may as well ask you how it is that I see *you* up and undressed?"

"I have told you why. I have had a bad dream about you. I tried to rest after it, but it was impossible. I could not make up my mind to stay where I was without knowing you were safe; and yet I could not make up my mind to come in here. I have been minutes hesitating at the door. It is so easy to laugh at a dream that you have not dreamed. Where is your candle?"

"Burnt out."

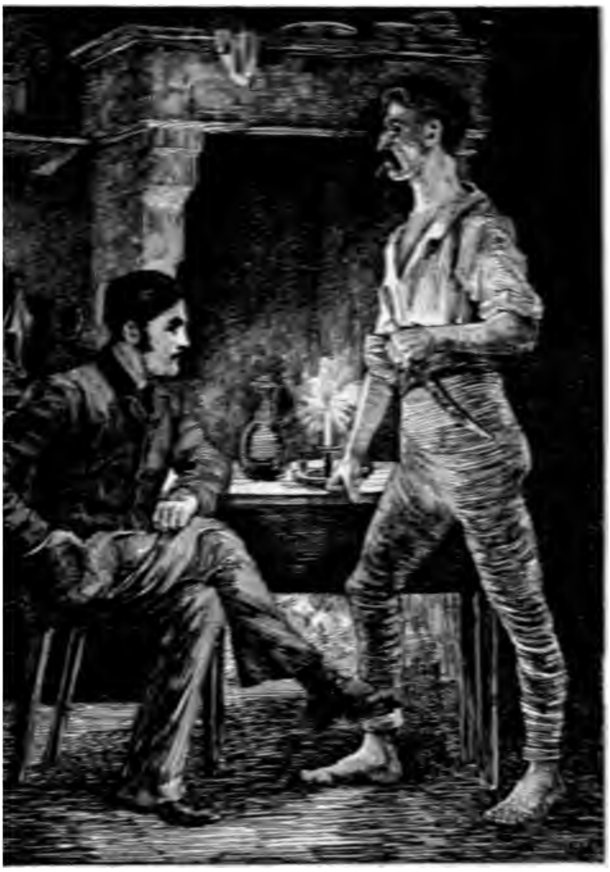
"I have a whole one in my room. Shall I fetch it?"

"Do so."

His room was very near, and he was absent for but a few seconds. Coming back with the candle in his hand, he kneeled down on the hearth and lighted it. As he blew with his breath a charred billet into flame for the purpose, Vendale, looking down at him, saw that his lips were white and not easy of control.

"Yes!" said Obenreizer, setting the lighted candl- table, "it was a bad dream. Only look at me!"

His feet were bare; his red flannel shirt was t



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Each of them leaned an elbow on the table, rested his head upon his hand, and sat looking at the flaring logs. Obenreizer remained watchful and still; but Vendale, after certain nervous twitches and starts, in one of which he rose to his feet and looked wildly about him, fell into the strangest confusion of dreams. He carried his papers in a leather case or pocket-book, in an inner breast-pocket of his buttoned travelling coat; and whatever he dreamed of, in the lethargy that got possession of him, something importunate in these papers called him out of that dream, though he could not wake from it. He was belated on the steppes of Russia (some shadowy person gave that name to the place) with Marguerite; and yet the sensation of a hand at his breast, softly feeling the outline of the pocket-book as he lay asleep before the fire, was present to him. He was shipwrecked in an open boat at sea, and, having lost his clothes, had no other covering than an old sail; and yet a creeping hand, tracing outside all the other pockets of the dress he actually wore, for papers, and finding none answer its touch, warned him to rouse himself. He was in the ancient vault at Cripple Corner, to which was transferred the very bed substantial and present in that very room at Basle; and Wilding (not dead, as he had supposed, and yet he did not wonder much) shook him, and whispered, "Look at that man! Don't you see he has risen, and is turning the pillow? Why should he turn the pillow, if not to seek those papers that are in your breast? Awake!" And yet he slept, and wandered off into other dreams.

Watchful and still, with his elbow on the table, and his head upon that hand, his companion at length said: "Vendale! We are called. Past Four!" Then, opening his eyes, he saw, turned sideways on him, the filmy face of Obenreizer.

"You have been in a heavy sleep," he said. "The fatigue of constant travelling and the cold!"

"I am broad awake now," cried Vendale, springing up, but with an unsteady footing. "Have n't you slept at all?"

"I may have dozed, but I seem to have been patiently looking at the fire. Whether or no, we must wash, and breakfast, and turn out. Past four, Vendale; past four!"

It was said in a tone to rouse him, for already he was half asleep again. In his preparation for the day, too, and at his breakfast, he was often virtually asleep while in mechanical

action. It was not until the cold dark day was closing in that he had any distincter impressions of the ride than jingling bells, bitter weather, slipping horses, frowning hillsides, bleak woods, and a stoppage at some wayside house of entertainment, where they had passed through a cow-house to reach the travellers' room above. He had been conscious of little more, except of Obenreizer sitting thoughtful at his side all day, and eyeing him much.

But, when he shook off his stupor, Obenreizer was not at his side. The carriage was stopping to bait at another wayside house; and a line of long narrow carts, laden with casks of wine, and drawn by horses with a quantity of blue collar and head-gear, were baiting too. These came from the direction in which the travellers were going, and Obenreizer (not thoughtful now, but cheerful and alert) was talking with the foremost driver. As Vendale stretched his limbs, circulated his blood, and cleared off the lees of his lethargy, with a sharp run to and fro in the bracing air, the line of carts moved on, the drivers all saluting Obenreizer as they passed him.

"Who are those?" asked Vendale.

"They are our carriers — Defresnier and Company's," replied Obenreizer. "Those are our casks of wine." He was singing to himself, and lighting a cigar.

"I have been drearily dull company to-day," said Vendale. "I don't know what has been the matter with me."

"You had no sleep last night; and a kind of brain-congestion frequently comes, at first, of such cold," said Obenreizer. "I have seen it often. After all, we shall have our journey for nothing, it seems."

"How for nothing?"

"The House is at Milan. You know we are a Wine House at Neuchâtel, and a Silk House at Milan? Well, Silk happening to press of a sudden, more than Wine, Defresnier was summoned to Milan. Rolland, the other partner, has been taken ill since his departure, and the doctors will allow him to see no one. A letter awaits you at Neuchâtel to tell you so. I have it from our chief carrier whom you saw me talking with. He was surprised to see me, and said he had that word for you if he met you. What do you do? Go back?"

"Go on," said Vendale.

"On?"

"On? Yes. Across the Alps, and down to Milan."

Obenreizer stopped in his smoking to look at Vendale, and then smoked heavily, looked up the road, looked down the road, looked down at the stones in the road at his feet.

"I have a very serious matter in charge," said Vendale; "more of these missing forms may be turned to as bad account, or worse; I am urged to lose no time in helping the House to take the thief; and nothing shall turn me back."

"No?" cried Obenreizer, taking out his cigar to smile, and giving his hand to his fellow-traveller. "Then nothing shall turn *me* back. Ho, driver! Despatch! Quick there! Let us push on!"

They travelled through the night. There had been snow, and there was a partial thaw, and they mostly travelled at a foot-pace, and always with many stoppages to breathe the splashed and floundering horses. After an hour's broad daylight, they drew rein at the inn door at Neuchâtel, having been some eight-and-twenty hours in conquering some eighty English miles.

When they had hurriedly refreshed and changed, they went together to the house of business of Defresnier and Company. There they found the letter which the wine-carrier had described, inclosing the tests and comparisons of handwriting essential to the discovery of the Forger. Vendale's determination to press forward, without resting, being already taken, the only question to delay them was by what Pass could they cross the Alps? Respecting the state of the two Passes of the St. Gotthard and the Simplon, the guides and mule-drivers differed greatly; and both Passes were still far enough off to prevent the travellers from having the benefit of any recent experience of either. Besides which, they well knew that a fall of snow might altogether change the described conditions in a single hour, even if they were correctly stated. But on the whole, the Simplon appearing to be the hopefuller route, Vendale decided to take it. Obenreizer bore little or no part in the discussion, and scarcely spoke.

To Geneva, to Lausanne, along the level margin of the lake to Vevay, so into the winding valley between the spurs of the mountains, and into the valley of the Rhone. The sound of the carriage wheels, as they rattled on, through the day, through the night, became as the wheels of a great clock, recording the

[redacted]

hours. No change of weather varied the journey after it had hardened into a sullen frost. In a sombre yellow sky they saw the Alpine ranges; and they saw enough of snow on nearer and much lower hilltops and hillsides to sully, by contrast, the purity of lake, torrent, and water-fall, and make the villages look discoloured and dirty. But no snow fell, nor was there any snow-drift on the road. The stalking along the valley of more or less of white mist, changing on their hair and dress into icicles, was the only variety between them and the gloomy sky. And still by day, and still by night, the wheels. And still they rolled, in the hearing of one of them, to the burden, altered from the burden of the Rhine, "The time is gone for robbing him alive, and I must murder him."

They came, at length, to the poor little town of Brieg, at the foot of the Simplon. They came there after dark, but yet could see how dwarfed men's works and men became with the immense mountains towering over them. Here they must lie for the night; and here was warmth of fire, and lamp, and dinner, and wine, and after-conference resounding, with guides and drivers. No human creature had come across the Pass for four days. The snow above the snow-line was too soft for wheeled carriage, and not hard enough for sledge. There was snow in the sky. There had been snow in the sky for days past, and the marvel was that it had not fallen, and the certainty was that it must fall. No vehicle could cross. The journey might be tried on mules, or it might be tried on foot; but the best guides must be paid danger-price in either case, and that, too, whether they succeeded in taking the two travellers across, or turned for safety and brought them back.

In this discussion Obenreizer bore no part whatever. He sat silently smoking by the fire until the room was cleared, and Vendale referred to him.

"Bah! I am weary of these poor devils and their trade," he said in reply. "Always the same story. It is the story of their trade to-day, as it was the story of their trade when I was a ragged boy. What do you and I want? We want a knapsack each, and a mountain-staff each. We want no guide; we should guide him; he would not guide us. We leave our portmanteaus here, and we cross together. We have been on the mountains together before now, and I am mountain-born, and I know this Pass—Pass!—rather High Road!—by heart.

We will leave these poor devils, in pity, to trade with others; but they must not delay us to make a pretence of earning money. Which is all they mean."

Vendale, glad to be quit of the dispute, and to cut the knot, — active, adventurous, bent on getting forward, and therefore very susceptible to the last hint, — readily assented. Within two hours they had purchased what they wanted for the expedition, had packed their knapsacks, and lay down to sleep.

At break of day they found half the town collected in the narrow streets to see them depart. The people talked together in groups; the guides and drivers whispered apart, and looked up at the sky; no one wished them a good journey.

As they began the ascent, a gleam of sun shone from the otherwise unaltered sky, and for a moment turned the tin spires of the town to silver.

"A good omen!" said Vendale (though it died out while he spoke). "Perhaps our example will open the Pass on this side."

"No; we shall not be followed," returned Obenreizer, looking up at the sky and back at the valley. "We shall be alone up yonder."

ON THE MOUNTAIN

The road was fair enough for stout walkers, and the air grew lighter and easier to breathe as the two ascended. But the settled gloom remained as it had remained for days back. Nature seemed to have come to a pause. The sense of hearing, no less than the sense of sight, was troubled by having to wait so long for the change, whatever it might be, that impended. The silence was as palpable and heavy as the lowering clouds — or rather cloud, for there seemed to be but one in all the sky, and that one covering the whole of it.

Although the light was thus dismally shrouded, the prospect was not obscured. Down in the valley of the Rhone behind them, the stream could be traced through all its many windings, oppressively sombre and solemn in its one leaden hue, a colourless waste. Far and high above them, glaciers and suspended avalanches overhung the spots where they must pass by and by; deep and dark below them, on their right, were awful precipice and roaring torrent; tremendous mountains arose in

every vista. The gigantic landscape, uncheered by a touch of changing light or a solitary ray of sun, was yet terribly distinct in its ferocity. The hearts of two lonely men might shrink a little, if they had to win their way for miles and hours among a legion of silent and motionless men — mere men like themselves — all looking at them with fixed and frowning front. But how much more when the legion is of Nature's mightiest works, and the frown may turn to fury in an instant!

As they ascended, the road became gradually more rugged and difficult. But the spirits of Vendale rose as they mounted higher, leaving so much more of the road behind them conquered. Obenreizer spoke little, and held on with a determined purpose. Both, in respect of agility and endurance, were well qualified for the expedition. Whatever the born mountaineer read in the weather-tokens that was illegible to the other, he kept to himself.

"Shall we get across to-day?" asked Vendale.

"No," replied the other. "You see how much deeper the snow lies here than it lay half a league lower. The higher we mount, the deeper the snow will lie. Walking is half wading even now. And the days are so short! If we get as high as the fifth Refuge, and lie to-night at the Hospice, we shall do well."

"Is there no danger of the weather rising in the night," asked Vendale anxiously, "and snowing us up?"

"There is danger enough about us," said Obenreizer, with a cautious glance onward and upward, "to render silence our best policy. You have heard of the Bridge of the Ganther?"

"I have crossed it once."

"In the summer?"

"Yes; in the travelling season."

"Yes; but it is another thing at this season," with a sneer, as though he were out of temper. "This is not a time of year, or a state of things, on an Alpine Pass, that you gentlemen holiday-travellers know much about."

"You are my Guide," said Vendale good-humouredly. "I trust to you."

"I am your Guide," said Obenreizer, "and I will guide you to your journey's end. There is the Bridge before us."

They had made a turn into a desolate and dismal ravine, where the snow lay deep below them, deep above them, de

on every side. While speaking, Obenreizer stood pointing at the Bridge, and observing Vendale's face, with a very singular expression on his own.

"If I, as Guide, had sent you over there, in advance, and encouraged you to give a shout or two, you might have brought down upon yourself tons and tons and tons of snow, that would not only have struck you dead, but buried you deep, at a blow."

"No doubt," said Vendale.

"No doubt. But that is not what I have to do, as Guide. So pass silently. Or, going as we go, our indiscretion might else crush and bury me. Let us get on!"

There was a great accumulation of snow on the Bridge; and such enormous accumulations of snow overhung them from projecting masses of rock, that they might have been making their way through a stormy sky of white clouds. Using his staff skilfully, sounding as he went, and looking upward, with bent shoulders, as it were to resist the mere idea of a fall from above, Obenreizer softly led. Vendale closely followed. They were yet in the midst of their dangerous way, when there came a mighty rush, followed by a sound as of thunder. Obenreizer clapped his hand on Vendale's mouth, and pointed to the track behind them. Its aspect had been wholly changed in a moment. An avalanche had swept over it, and plunged into the torrent at the bottom of the gulf below.

Their appearance at the solitary Inn, not far beyond this terrible Bridge, elicited many expressions of astonishment from the people shut up in the house. "We stay but to rest," said Obenreizer, shaking the snow from his dress at the fire. "This gentleman has very pressing occasion to get across; tell them, Vendale."

"Assuredly, I have very pressing occasion. I must cross."

"You hear, all of you? My friend has very pressing occasion to get across, and we want no advice and no help. I am as good a guide, my fellow-countrymen, as any of you. Now, give us to eat and drink."

In exactly the same way, and in nearly the same words, when it was coming on dark, and they had struggled through the greatly increased difficulties of the road, and had at last reached their destination for the night, Obenreizer said to the astonished people of the Hospice, gathering about them at the fire, while

they were yet in the act of getting their wet shoes off, and shaking the snow from their clothes: —

"It is well to understand one another, friends all. This gentleman —"

"— Has," said Vendale, readily taking him up with a smile, "very pressing occasion to get across. Must cross."

"You hear? — Has very pressing occasion to get across, must cross. We want no advice and no help. I am mountain-born, and act as Guide. Do not worry us by talking about it, but let us have supper, and wine, and bed."

All through the intense cold of the night the same awful stillness. Again at sunrise, no sunny tinge to gild or redden the snow. The same interminable waste of deathly white; the same immovable air; the same monotonous gloom in the sky.

"Travellers!" a friendly voice called to them from the door, after they were afoot, knapsack on back and staff in hand, as yesterday; "recollect! There are five places of shelter, near together, on the dangerous road before you; and there is the wooden cross, and there is the next Hospice. Do not stray from the track. If the *Tourmente* comes on, take shelter instantly!"

"The trade of these poor devils!" said Obenreizer to his friend, with a contemptuous backward wave of his hand towards the voice. "How they stick to their trade! You Englishmen say we Swiss are mercenary. Truly, it does look like it."

They had divided between the two knapsacks such refreshments as they had been able to obtain that morning, and as they deemed it prudent to take. Obenreizer carried the wine as his share of the burden; Vendale, the bread and meat and cheese, and the flask of brandy.

They had for some time laboured upward and onward through the snow — which was now above their knees in the track, and of unknown depth elsewhere — and they were still labouring upward and onward through the most frightful part of that tremendous desolation, when snow began to fall. At first, but a few flakes descended slowly and steadily. After a little while the fall grew much denser, and suddenly it began without apparent cause to whirl itself into spiral shapes. Instantly ensuing upon this last change, an icy blast came roaring at them, and every sound and force imprisoned until now was let loose.

One of the dismal galleries through which the road is carried at that perilous point, a cave eked out by arches of great strength, was near at hand. They struggled into it, and the storm raged wildly. The noise of the wind; the noise of the water; the thundering down of displaced masses of rock and snow; the awful voices with which not only that gorge, but every gorge in the whole monstrous range, seemed to be suddenly endowed; the darkness as of night; the violent revolving of the snow, which beat and broke it into spray, and blinded them; the madness of everything around insatiate for destruction; the rapid substitution of furious violence for unnatural calm, and hosts of appalling sounds for silence, — these were things, on the edge of a deep abyss, to chill the blood, though the fierce wind, made actually solid by ice and snow, had failed to chill it.

Obenreizer, walking to and fro in the gallery without ceasing, signed to Vendale to help him unbuckle his knapsack. They could see each other, but could not have heard each other speak. Vendale complying, Obenreizer produced his bottle of wine, and poured some out, motioning Vendale to take that for warmth's sake, and not brandy. Vendale again complying, Obenreizer seemed to drink after him, and the two walked backwards and forwards side by side; both well knowing that to rest or sleep would be to die.

The snow came driving heavily into the gallery by the upper end at which they would pass out of it, if they ever passed out; for greater dangers lay on the road behind them than before. The snow soon began to choke the arch. An hour more, and it lay so high as to block out half the returning daylight. But it froze hard now as it fell, and could be clambered through or over. The violence of the mountain storm was gradually yielding to a steady snow-fall. The wind still raged at intervals, but not incessantly; and, when it paused, the snow fell in heavy flakes.

They might have been two hours in their frightful prison, when Obenreizer, now crunching into the mound, now creeping over it with his head bowed down and his body touching the top of the arch, made his way out. Vendale followed close upon him, but followed without clear motive or calculation. For the lethargy of Basle was creeping over him again, and mastering his senses.

How far he had followed out of the gallery, or with what obstacles he had since contended, he knew not. He became roused to the knowledge that Obenreizer had set upon him, and that they were struggling desperately in the snow. He became roused to the remembrance of what his assailant carried in a girdle. He felt for it, drew it, struck at him, struggled again, struck at him again, cast him off, and stood face to face with him.

"I promised to guide you to your journey's end," said Obenreizer, "and I have kept my promise. The journey of your life ends here. Nothing can prolong it. You are sleeping as you stand."

"You are a villain! What have you done to me?"

"You are a fool! I have drugged you. You are doubly a fool, for I drugged you once before upon the journey, to try you. You are trebly a fool, for I am the thief and forger, and in a few moments I shall take those proofs against the thief and forger from your insensible body."

The entrapped man tried to throw off the lethargy, but its fatal hold upon him was so sure that, even while he heard those words, he stupidly wondered which of them had been wounded, and whose blood it was that he saw sprinkled on the snow.

"What have I done to you," he asked, heavily and thickly, "that you should be — so base — a murderer?"

"Done to me? You would have destroyed me, but that you have come to your journey's end. Your cursed activity interposed between me and the time I had counted on in which I might have replaced the money. Done to me? You have come in my way — not once, not twice, but again and again and again. Did I try to shake you off in the beginning, or no? You were not to be shaken off. Therefore you die here."

Vendale tried to think coherently, tried to speak coherently, tried to pick up the iron-shod staff he had let fall; failing to touch it, tried to stagger on without its aid. All in vain, all in vain! He stumbled, and fell heavily forward on the brink of the deep chasm.

Stupefied, dozing, unable to stand upon his feet, a veil before his eyes, his sense of hearing deadened, he made such a vigorous rally that, supporting himself on his hands, he saw his enemy standing calmly over him, and heard him speak.

"You call me murderer," said Obenreizer with a grim laugh. "The name matters very little. But at least I have set my

life against yours, for I am surrounded by dangers, and may never make my way out of this place. The *Tourmente* is rising again. The snow is on the whirl. I must have the papers now. Every moment has my life in it."

"Stop!" cried Vendale in a terrible voice, staggering up with a last flash of fire breaking out of him, and clutching the thievish hands at his breast in both of his. "Stop! Stand away from me! God bless my Marguerite! Happily she will never know how I died. Stand off from me, and let me look at your murderous face. Let it remind me — of something — left to say."

The sight of him fighting so hard for his senses, and the doubt whether he might not for the instant be possessed by the strength of a dozen men, kept his opponent still. Wildly glaring at him, Vendale faltered out the broken words: —

"It shall not be — the trust — of the dead — betrayed by me — reputed parents — misinherited fortune — see to it!"

As his head dropped on his breast, and he stumbled on the brink of the chasm as before, the thievish hands went once more, quick and busy, to his breast. He made a convulsive attempt to cry "No!" desperately rolled himself over into the gulf, and sank away from his enemy's touch, like a phantom in a dreadful dream.

The mountain storm raged again, and passed again. The awful mountain voices died away, the moon rose, and the soft and silent snow fell.

Two men and two large dogs came out at the door of the Hospice. The men looked carefully around them, and up at the sky. The dogs rolled in the snow, and took it into their mouths, and cast it up with their paws.

One of the men said to the other, "We may venture now. We may find them in one of the five Refuges." Each fastened on his back a basket; each took in his hand a strong spiked pole; each girded under his arms a looped end of a stout rope, so that they were tied together.

Suddenly the dogs desisted from their gambols in the snow, stood looking down the ascent, put their noses up, put their noses down, became greatly excited, and broke into a deep loud bay together.

The two men looked in the faces of the two dogs. The two

dogs looked, with at least equal intelligence, in the faces of the two men.

"Au secours, then! Help! To the rescue!" cried the two men. The two dogs, with a glad, deep, generous bark, bounded away.

"Two more mad ones!" said the men, stricken motionless, and looking away in the moonlight. "Is it possible in such weather? And one of them a woman!"

Each of the dogs had the corner of a woman's dress in its mouth, and drew her along. She fondled their heads as she came up, and she came up through the snow with an accustomed tread. Not so the large man with her, who was spent and winded.

"Dear guides, dear friends of travellers! I am of your country. We seek two gentlemen crossing the Pass, who should have reached the Hospice this evening."

"They have reached it, mam'selle."

"Thank Heaven! Oh, thank Heaven!"

"But, unhappily, they have gone on again. We are setting forth to seek them even now. We had to wait until the *Tourmente* passed. It has been fearful up here."

"Dear guides, dear friends of travellers! Let me go with you. Let me go with you for the love of GOD! One of those gentlemen is to be my husband. I love him, oh, so dearly! Oh, so dearly! You see I am not faint, you see I am not tired. I am born a peasant girl. I will show you that I know well how to fasten myself to your ropes. I will do it with my own hands. I will swear to be brave and good. But let me go with you, let me go with you! If any mischance should have befallen him, my love would find him, when nothing else could. On my knees, dear friends of travellers! By the love your dear mothers had for your fathers!"

The good rough fellows were moved. "After all," they murmured to one another, "she speaks but the truth. She knows the ways of the mountains. See how marvellously she has come here. But as to monsieur there, mam'selle?"

"Dear Mr. Joey," said Marguerite, addressing him in his own tongue, "you will remain at the house, and wait for me; will you not?"

"If I knowed which o' you two recommended it," growled Joey Ladle, eyeing the two men with great indignation, "I'd

you for sixpence, and give you half a crown towards your
ses. No, miss. I'll stick to you as long as there's any
ng left in me, and I'll die for you when I can't do better."
e state of the moon rendering it highly important that no
should be lost, and the dogs showing signs of great uneasi-
the two men quickly took their resolution. The rope that
l them together was exchanged for a longer one, the party
secured, Marguerite second, and the Cellarman last; and
set out for the Refuge. The actual distance of those
s was nothing: the whole five, and the next Hospice not
being within two miles; but the ghastly way was whitened
nd sheeted over.

ey made no miss in reaching the Gallery where the two
aken shelter. The second storm of wind and snow had so
y swept over it since, that their tracks were gone. But
ogs went to and fro with their noses down, and were con-
. The party stopping, however, at the further arch, where
econd storm had been especially furious, and where the
was deep, the dogs became troubled, and went about and
in quest of a lost purpose.

e great abyss being known to lie on the right, they wan-
too much to the left, and had to regain the way with
e labour through a deep field of snow. The leader of
ne had stopped it, and was taking note of the landmarks,
one of the dogs fell to tearing up the snow a little before
Advancing and stooping to look at it, thinking that
one might be overwhelmed there, they saw that it was
d, and that the stain was red.

e other dog was now seen to look over the brink of the
with his forelegs straightened out, lest he should fall into
d to tremble in every limb. Then the dog who had found
ained snow joined him, and then they ran to and fro, dis-
d and whining. Finally, they both stopped on the brink
er, and, setting up their heads, howled dolefully.

'here is some one lying below," said Marguerite.

think so," said the foremost man. "Stand well inward,
wo last, and let us look over."

e last man kindled two torches from his basket, and handed
forward. The leader taking one, and Marguerite the other,
looked down: now shading the torches, now moving them
e right or left, now raising them, now depressing them, as

moonlight far below contended with black shadows. A piercing cry from Marguerite broke a long silence.

"My God! On a projecting point, where a wall of ice stretches forward over the torrent, I see a human form!"

"Where, mam'selle, where?"

"See, there! On the shelf of ice below the dogs!"

The leader, with a sickened aspect, drew inward, and they were all silent. But they were not all inactive, for Marguerite, with swift and skilful fingers, had detached both herself and him from the rope in a few seconds.

"Show me the baskets. These two are the only ropes?"

"The only ropes here, mam'selle; but at the Hospice—"

"If he is alive — I know it is my lover — he will be dead before you can return. Dear Guides! Blessed friends of travellers! Look at me. Watch my hands. If they falter or go wrong, make me your prisoner by force. If they are steady and go right, help me to save him!"

She girded herself with a cord under the breast and arms, she formed it into a kind of jacket, she drew it into knots, she laid its end side by side with the end of the other cord, she twisted and twined the two together, she knotted them together, she set her foot upon the knots, she strained them, she held them for the two men to strain at.

"She is inspired," they said to one another.

"By the Almighty's mercy!" she exclaimed. "You both know that I am by far the lightest here. Give me the brandy and the wine, and lower me down to him. Then go for assistance and a stronger rope. You see that when it is lowered to me — look at this about me now — I can make it fast and safe to his body. Alive or dead, I will bring him up, or die with him. I love him passionately. Can I say more?"

They turned to her companion, but he was lying senseless on the snow.

"Lower me down to him," she said, taking two little kegs they had brought, and hanging them about her, "or I will dash myself to pieces! I am a peasant, and I know no giddiness or fear; and this is nothing to me, and I passionately love him. Lower me down!"

"Mam'selle, mam'selle, he must be dying or dead."

"Dying or dead, my husband's head shall lie upon my breast, or I will dash myself to pieces!"

They yielded, overborne. With such precautions as their skill and the circumstances admitted, they let her slip from the summit, guiding herself down the precipitous icy wall with her hand, and they lowered down, and lowered down, and lowered down, until the cry came up, "Enough!"

"Is it really he, and is he dead?" they called down, looking over.

The cry came up, "He is insensible; but his heart beats. It beats against mine."

"How does he lie?"

The cry came up, "Upon a ledge of ice. It has thawed beneath him, and it will thaw beneath me. Hasten! If we die, I am content."

One of the two men hurried off with the dogs at such topmost speed as he could make; the other set up the lighted torches in the snow, and applied himself to recovering the Englishman. Much snow-chafing and some brandy got him on his legs, but delirious, and quite unconscious where he was.

The watch remained upon the brink, and his cry went down continually, "Courage! They will soon be here. How goes it?" and the cry came up, "His heart still beats against mine. I warm him in my arms. I have cast off the rope, for the ice melts under us, and the rope would separate me from him; but I am not afraid."

The moon went down behind the mountain-tops, and all the abyss lay in darkness. The cry went down, "How goes it?" The cry came up, "We are sinking lower, but his heart still beats against mine."

At length the eager barking of the dogs, and a flare of light upon the snow, proclaimed that help was coming on. Twenty or thirty men, lamps, torches, litters, ropes, blankets, wood to kindle a great fire, restoratives and stimulants, came in fast. The dogs ran from one man to another, and from this thing to that, and ran to the edge of the abyss, dumbly entreating Speed, speed, speed!

The cry went down, "Thanks to God, all is ready. How goes it?"

The cry came up, "We are sinking still, and we are deadly cold. His heart no longer beats against mine. Let no one come down to add to our weight. Lower the rope only."

The fire was kindled high, a great glare of torches lighted

the sides of the precipice, lamps were lowered, a strong r
was lowered. She could be seen passing it round him,
making it secure.

The cry came up into a deathly silence, "Raise! Softly
They could see her diminished figure shrink as he was sw
into the air.

They gave no shout when some of them laid him on a litt
and others lowered another strong rope. The cry again ca
up into a deathly silence, "Raise! Softly!" But when t
caught her at the brink, then they shouted, then they we
then they gave thanks to Heaven, then they kissed her f
then they kissed her dress, then the dogs caressed her, lic
her icy hands, and with their honest faces warmed her fro
bosom!

She broke from them all, and sank over him on his litt
with both her loving hands upon the heart that stood still.[1]

[1] Act IV. follows, and in that the mystery is unravelled by Bintrey, aided
the confession of the entrapped Obenreizer. George Vendale is the real Wa
Wilding.